Ānāpānasati
(Mindfulness of Breathing)



Buddhadāsa Bhikkhu

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Translated from the Thai Version

By

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Original Title: อานาปานสติภาวนา

Published

By

Sublime Life Mission

5/1–2 Adsadang Road,

Bangkok, Thailand.

First Edition 1980

Vol. i, ii, iii

October 2523/1980

Preface

Several supporters of the Dhammadāna Foundation have co-operated in their own ways, according to their capacities and capabilities, in bringing out this English version of Ānāpānasati-bhāvanā. To all of them, I express my Anumodanā, hearty appreciation, both personally and on behalf of the Foundation.

The term "Ānāpānasati" does not mean, as is generally interpreted, *mindfulness established on in and out breathing*. Actually it means *mindfulness established* on an object *all the time with each in and out breath*: Initially one establishes mindfulness on the breathing itself, then on different kinds of feeling, different states of mind, then the characteristic of impermanence… and finally on relinquishment, which is the ultimate objective of the practice.

The method of practising Ānāpānasati, as explained in the Ānāpānasati-sutta of the Majjhima Nikāya, is complete in itself. One can understand and practise this method comparatively more easily than the

methods found in other suttas. In comparison, this particular method is certainly designed more subtly and thoroughly in line with the four Foundations of Mindfulness (*Satipaṭṭhāna*—in the real sense of the word). As soon as this method of Ānāpānasati has been practised completely with all the sixteen steps or stages, the four Satipaṭṭhanas are fulfilled in themselves. These being fulfilled, the seven Factors of Enlightenment are perfected *automatically or without one's conscious efforts*; and thus Clear-vision and Deliverance are perfected of their own accords, in a natural way.

It is hoped that the readers will try to study this method closely with all its details, practise thoroughly and carefully, and achieve satisfactory results.

BUDDHADĀSA INDAPAÑÑO

Mokkhabalārāma,
Chaiya.
March 20, 2514

Introduction

For the first time in the English language a comprehensive manual of Buddhist meditation known as Ānāpānasati (the development of mindfulness of breathing) is available.

Although this manual is primarily intended for the benefit of monks, it will greatly assist laymen, too, who wish to undertake a course of meditation but who do not have the guidance of a teacher.

Originally published in Thai, this manual is one of the major works of the Ven. Buddhadāsa Bhikkhu and delivered in 1959 in the form of a series of lectures to monks of Suanmokkha Monastery, Chaiya, Thailand.

Ven. Buddhadāsa Bhikkhu, a major voice in the Buddhist world, is an accepted master of Buddhist meditation. In constructive positive language, the manual guides the meditator through the 16 steps of Ānāpānasati. Every difficulty that the meditator is

liable to face as well as the benefits of practice is examined at length.

All that remains is for the aspirant to the noble path to get on with the job.

The late Mr. Sathian Bodhinanda, a noted lecturer in Buddhist studies at Mahamakut University, Bangkok, regarded the manual as the best of the hundreds of works of the Ven. Buddhadāsa Bhikkhu.

Innumerable difficulties were faced in the translation since the structure of the Thai language is based on feeling with an undercurrent of warm expression — something difficult to convey in the English language.

However the translated version has been examined for clarity on several occasions and the translator trusts that some difficult passages will not appear obscure.

The absolute newcomer to meditation may be a little baffled or overcome by the opening section of the manual. This should not deter him. He should en-

deavour to follow to the letter the system of practice as explained by Ven. Buddhadāsa Bhikkhu.

To some degree the rhythm of the Thai version has been lost in translation leaving as it were a black and white version of a colour film. This was unavoidable.

The translator reiterates again that readers should use this manual for the express purpose it was intended — for practice.

Finally, I must express my deep thanks to Upasaka Virote Siriat of the Sublime Life Mission, who has borne the burden of the publication of this book.

This volume covers the first four steps or stages of Ānāpānasati, the remaining steps will be published soon.

BHIKKHU NĀGASENA
Wat Benchamabopit
(The Marble Temple)
Bangkok.
March 1, 2514/1971

Foreword

The Venerable Bhikkhu Nāgasena has asked me to write a short foreword to his English translation of this worthy book.

To my mind, the practice of Ānāpānasati (Mindfulness of Breathing), apart from being a way of Buddhist meditation, is a very helpful and necessary means of building strength of mind and body to face the difficulties and problems of a working life in this confused modern world of ours.

I have practised this method of meditation for years, and feel that it is really worthy of the endeavours of all. Briefly, the practice of Ānāpānasati helps me to work well and to win in all the confrontations I face; it is really for the lay-man — the simple man-in-the-street.

The author of this treatise is no less a personage than the Most Venerable Buddhadāsa Bhikkhu, a great thinker of the east, whom I respect as my teacher.

The translator is a well-known scholar and has done an admirable job. I hope that this book will be read, known, and practised widely around the world.

In this way it will contribute to world Peace.

PROFESSOR SANYA DHARMASAKTI

President, Buddhist Association of Thailand.
President, Privy Council of H. M. The King of Thailand.
Former Prime Minister of Thailand.
Vice President, World Fellowship of Buddhists.

Bangkok, April 21, 1976.

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Chapter I

Preliminaries

Let it be said from the beginning: a strict moral discipline must be kept to make progress in meditation.

Moral discipline can be summed up under four headings:

(1) Restraint in accordance with the Disciplinary Code (*pāṭimokkha*) and the additional minor rules;

(2) Restraint of the senses, that is, not reacting, neither liking nor disliking, when there is contact between any of the six sense organs (eye, ear, nose, tongue, body, and mind) and its object (form, sound, and so on);

(3) Purity of livelihood, which means earning one's living in a way beyond reproach;

(4) Morality with regard to the Four Requisites, which means making use of the Four Requisites (clothing, food, dwelling, and medicine) with mindfulness and wise discrimination.

Although this account of morality under four headings is not found until well after the Buddha's time, it is not out of keeping with the spirit of his teaching and can well be made use of as a guide to practice. The meditator should grasp the spirit of moral discipline. Though the monk cannot memorize all the major rules of the *Pāṭimokkha*, let alone the details of the various minor rules, if he grasps the spirit of the moral practice and keeps to it, he is very well established in morality. Herein lies the significance of the moral practice.

The essence of the ascetic discipline consists in contentment with the means of supporting life, that is, the Four Requisites, and unlimited endurance in practising. Here is an illustration of contentment with respect to food:

Food is to be got in simple way, which for a *bhikkhu* means going out to receive alms. On his alms-round

the *bhikkhu* must not select houses where he expects to get better food, but must go from house to house without missing any. He should eat from one vessel only, take food only once a day, not eat food received after he has begun eating, and so on. But he should not take into account only the rules of conduct actually prescribed. Any mode of conduct that results in less trouble and involvement and conduces to progress in the practice ought to be adopted.

As to clothing, the *bhikkhu* is advised to make his robes out of cloth that is of no use to others, which means collecting discarded cloth and making what are called Rag-Robes. In addition to his usual three robes a *bhikkhu* is allowed one other piece of cloth for bathing during the rainy season. If he lacks this bathing cloth, he may bathe without it — an example of contentment with regard to clothing.

As to dwelling, a *bhikkhu* is supposed to live in a forest, in the open air, at the foot of a tree, in a graveyard, or if need be — as, for instance, during the rainy season — in any other place offered. Here the ascetic discipline consists in not owning any dwell-

ing whatsoever, in being content with whatever is available, and in enduring all kinds of weather. As in the matter of food and clothing, the essential point is this: The meditator should adopt any mode of conduct, prescribed or not, that is conducive to success in the practice.

With regard to medicine no specific mode of conduct is laid down, for the simple reason that medicine does not arouse covetousness or greed. After all, no-one normally takes medicine unnecessarily—though in this modern age this is no longer so true. There are now available "medicines" such as cosmetics which are consumed quite unnecessarily, just for the sake of fashion. Others which are genuinely for curing ailments are on sale in great variety to suit individual taste. The meditator should use only the type of medicine genuinely needed. He must be circumspect and contented as regards the use of medicine, as befits a person practising Dhamma.

There is another special kind of ascetic discipline (the last of the traditional thirteen) which is especially designed to render the meditator "adamantine," to strengthen his endurance. Its immediate

object is avoidance of the pleasure of sleep. The meditator is advised at times not to lie down to sleep at all. Here moderation must most definitely be observed.

From this outline it is clear that the ascetic discipline has been added to that of morality in order to strengthen both mind—and body, a function which is, of course, beyond the range of morality alone. Nevertheless ascetic discipline and morality must go hand in hand as the foundation for meditation. Meditation, morality, and ascetic discipline are in fact inseparable. The moral and ascetic disciplines are to be regarded as a practice of the most general kind, to be applied at all times as the essence of Right Living. Having summed them up briefly, we shall now deal with the practices specifically related to the development of concentration (*samādhi-bhāvanā*).

We discuss first of all the so-called Preliminaries (*pubbabhāga*). These Preliminaries are things to be done before actually beginning the meditation practice. Though a later addition quite unknown in the days of the Buddha, the Preliminaries represent a

widely and faithfully practised tradition, and are considered of some importance. The fact that they are a later addition does not mean that they are of no use. The meditator must recognize the Preliminaries as a part of the practice, though he must take care not to become blindly attached to them as so many people do these days. Certain of the practices contained in the Preliminaries are so strictly followed nowadays in some centres that to dispense with them would be unthinkable. We shall now discuss the Preliminaries one by one.

(1) *Paying respects to the bhikkhu-in-charge of the training centre*: In the days of the Buddha *bhikkhu*-in-charge of training centres did not exist; and training centres in the modern sense did not exist either, since the would-be meditator used to go and take up residence near his own preceptor and teacher. The main purpose of this ritual as now practised is to create mutual understanding between the meditator and the *bhikkhu*-in-charge. It gives the *bhikkhu*-in-charge a chance to learn what kind of person, the meditator is: what particular imperfections he has, what sort of character he has, what facilities he will need for his practice, and so

on. Having convinced himself of the genuineness of the meditator's motives, the *bhikkhu*-in-charge will be quite willing to help him in every way possible. Here the main thing is the practice of dhamma and not mere externals, not the observance of the custom as such. If there is some point on which the two just cannot come to an understanding, the meditator had better find some other training centre. Paying respects is the first thing to be done on arriving at a new centre, and it need be done only the once. Thereafter *bhikkhu*-in-charge and meditator have to live together, agreeing to help each other out of mutual good will.

(2) *Paying respects to the meditation teacher*: The meditator should pay his respects to his instructor regularly throughout the whole period of training. In the days of the Buddha this was not regarded as a mere ritual but as something conducive to genuine respect for and reliance on the teacher.

If the meditator considers that this ritual bowing down to the instructor and paying of respects is of no value, he should not perform it. To do so would be a waste of time. Different individuals have differ-

ent mental characteristics. A person practising mental development must have a mental level well above that of ritualism. Otherwise he is not mature enough to practise for the realization of impermanence, unsatisfactoriness, and non-selfhood, which are most subtle things to penetrate. But the accepted procedures relating to mental training have been modified in the course of time, owing to various kinds of worldly attachment, and nowadays affect everyone. The result is that such formalities as the ritual paying of respects to the teacher and the making of devotional offerings to him have come to be regarded as essential. An earnest meditator must realize all this and act in the way most conducive to his own mental well-being. At the same time he must not look down on others who have not as yet transcended ritualism. Nowadays such preliminary formalities are increasing in popularity, but only among people who have nothing more than faith; they are no longer practised by discerning people. Training centres are established to meet the specific needs of certain types of people; and some centres have degenerated, to the extent that they are making a business out of providing people with the ritualism they crave for.

The meditator must respect and trust his teacher so that he can give full attention while being instructed. If he has not enough respect for and confidence in the teacher, he will listen only half-heartedly, not giving much thought to the teacher's words. Here at the very beginning lies a root cause of failure. So mutual understanding is of the utmost importance; just to pay one's respects by prostrating three times is not enough. The meditation teacher, for his part, should examine the trainee as thoroughly as a doctor would his patient. In an atmosphere of sincerity, respect, and confidence the disciple will not be reluctant to talk frankly about his particular disease (mental imperfections) so that the teacher can administer his remedy. If there is a relationship full of father-and-son affection everything will go smoothly. So the thing to be offered to the teacher as a token of respect is not something external, not just candles and incense, but rather an open heart full of confidence and sincerity. Something from within is to be offered. With such an offering there will be a close relationship between master and disciple, which will be conducive to success in the meditation practice.

Here is a Zen story which provides food for thought. A certain *bhikkhu* was so earnest and keen to learn the way of practice from the great Bodhidharma that to prove his earnestness he cut off one of his hands. Only after this proof was Bodhidharma prepared to teach him. The *bhikkhu* had previously begged to be taught dozens of times but Bodhidharma had remained sitting, face to the wall, without opening his mouth. This exemplary Zen story is more than a thousand years old, and it is not the only one of its kind. Even these days similar stories are told. We hear of people seeking instruction being tested and examined as to their zeal and earnestness in different ways peculiar to the different training centres. In some centres, for example, the seeker is made to sit on the steps, sometimes for two days and nights, sometimes for three, and in some cases for as long as seven days and seven nights. Moreover he may have to sit in a certain posture without the least movement. He may have to remain prostrate, for instance, until such time as the instructor responds to his request to become a student. Compare this endurance test with the mere paying of respects by offering flowers, candles, and incense which we consider adequate.

So let the truth-seeker understand the real significance of these customs and rituals and act in the way most conducive to his own well-being.

(3) *Paying homage to the Triple Gem* (*Buddha, Dhamma, and Sangha*): The lighting of candles and incense in the shrine room in homage to the Triple Gem when formally receiving the meditation object or each time before starting the practice is yet another kind of devotional offering. Some people perform it as enthusiastically as if without it everything would be ruined. In this practice too the chronic disease of attachment to—ritualism lingers on. How can a practice aimed at higher wisdom, supramundane wisdom, have anything to do with candles and incense? The explanation is as for (1) and (2) above.

This practice of paying homage to the Triple Gem is usually motivated by clinging. A person who has really given his heart to the Triple Gem may light candles or not. To him it makes no difference. But if one is going to light candles and incense, one should not waste time making a big fuss about it. It has to do with social custom rather than with the practice of meditation. In the days of the Buddha

meditators, especially the disciples of the Buddha, had nothing to do with candles and incense. They never bothered to take candles and incense along with them to the forest to light before beginning their practice. The meditator should consider well and decide what he will do in a case where this custom is being observed collectively by a number of people. In making his decision he should have in mind his own convenience and at the same time avoidance of distraction and social friction. The buying of candles and incense and lighting them each time before beginning to practise shows in itself that this custom is typical of amateur meditators, people for whom the practice is only a passing fad. The meditator who is earnestly devoted to the practice, who practises continuously, like clockwork, in every posture, day and night, while awake and while asleep, will hardly have the time to make arrangements for lighting candles and incense each day. Let the meditator light candles in his own mind so that it is full of the brightest light day and night, whether he is awake or asleep. If he is earnestly devoted to the practice, let him not be concerned with buying or collecting candles and making extra trouble for himself.

(4) *Confessing offences* (*for bhikkhu*) *and taking the Precepts* (*for lay follower*) *before beginning to practise*: This is normally done regularly, as if a *bhikkhu* were always full of offences against the *Pāṭimokkha*. To go through the actions of confessing without having actually committed any offence is once again mere ritualism. Think a moment: Supposing a *bhikkhu* had committed a really serious offence, what then? Is he to perform the same act of confession? If so, surely that act of confession would be an all the more meaningless ritual. Every *bhikkhu* should already be without fault or offence before beginning the practice. He should not have anything to confess. Performing the ritual of confession is, then, merely exhibitionism, a display of formalism or ritualism, the like, of which never existed in the days of the Buddha. Such performances are time-wasting and distracting, if not disgusting.

The taking of the Precepts by laymen before the practice is to be interpreted in much the same way. This ritual is not found even in post-canonical works such as the "Path of Purification" (*Visuddhi-Magga*), let alone at the time of the Buddha himself. The real meaning of confession and taking of

the Precepts is this: In order to practise mind-training the meditator must be "pure in word and deed," so that he has no guilty conscience to disturb him. If he does have guilt feelings, his mind will be restless and unable to concentrate. He must first know how to adjust himself mentally so that the mind is steady and at ease. If he has done some wrong and his mind is harassed by guilt feelings, he must be intelligent and acknowledge his wrong-doing. A perfunctory confession or taking of the Precepts before beginning the practice is ridiculous. The right thing for the meditator to do in this case is determine to solve the problem once for all, so that it will not come to trouble his mind during the practice time.

Presumably a person whose temperament is dominated by belief, a follower of one of the theistic religions for instance, would confess his sins to the priest—who is supposed to receive the burden of sin on behalf of God—and with his mind thus "purified" begin practising meditation. But if sins can be neutralized merely by being confessed, why practise meditation at all? The Buddhist practice of meditation is based on insight. The only way to over-

come evil conditions is to develop insight by practising meditation. Merely relying on ritual or belief will not help. Our perception of evil must be perception with insight; we must know what is the root cause of evil and how that cause can be eradicated. Knowing this, the mind will be pacified, calm enough to practise meditation. We have to be fully aware; we have to "confess" our faults *all the time*; we have to really see our faults as faults, seeing them together with their inherent dangers and determined to improve ourselves by the power of insight. Then when the time comes to practise to achieve this result, the mind will be vigorous, enthusiastic, fit for practice; no feeling of remorse will cloud the mind; it will not recoil or become restless and distracted. Thus the meditator will succeed in his concentration, gradually developing it along with the power of insight. Seen in this light, the ritual of hurriedly confessing faults, and taking the Precepts just before beginning the practice is a farce, utterly devoid of rime or reason. People attached to this ritual belong in the category of dabblers, amateur meditators. On the other hand, if the meditator deems it desirable to perform this ritual in order to avoid disharmony with others, he may do so. But in reality he has to be aware of

his faults *all the time*, and practise meditation day and night in order to overcome them.

(5) *Submission to the Triple Gem*: Another ritual that has come into existence is that of giving oneself up to the Buddha or to the Triple Gem. In this ritual Pali phrases are intoned, such as "*Imāhaṃ bhagavā attabhāvaṃ tumhākaṃ pariccajāmi*," which means "Here, O Blessed One, I dedicate myself to thee." This kind of ritual serves only to boost egotistic feelings; it never existed in the days of the Buddha. The extent to which this ritual is meaningful at the present day has to be carefully weighed up, since the feelings of a person "submitting himself to the Triple Gem" cannot be known to another. If the ritual is performed merely to copy other people, or out of attachment to self, to "me" and "my", or if it is just a form of flattery based on the hope of getting something in return, then it does nothing but feed and strengthen one's blind faith—which is, of course, a great hindrance to progress towards supramundane wisdom. The only rational way to dedicate one's life and one's whole being consists in genuinely recognizing the excellence of the Dhamma, seeing nothing superior to the Dhamma, and being genuinely intent on the practice.

This is true submission; it has nothing to do with any kind of ritualism or formalism whatsoever.

Like confession of faults, submission to the Triple Gem ought to be practised *all the time*. It should not be a mere gesture that the meditator performs just when he is about to practise. There are some people who have previously had no idea of submission to the Triple Gem, but who decide, on the spot, all of a sudden, to perform this rite of submission just in order to be with the crowd. For such people the crowd apparently carries more weight than does the Triple Gem. Such people have everything back to front; they are not ready for the practice of meditation; their foundation is thoroughly unsuitable for the building of anything lofty and delicate. It is essential that the meditator should have submitted himself *already*, and that he have full confidence in the Triple Gem; only then will his mind be full of the enthusiasm needed to carry him through the practice.

(6) *Submission to the teacher*: There is in some centres a very strict rule concerning the ritual of submitting to the teacher, to be performed either in private or in public. Here again different Pali

phrases are used for different cases. One commonly used formula is: "*Imāhaṃ ācariya attabhāvaṃ tumhākaṃ pariccajāmi,*" "Here, O teacher, I dedicate myself to thee." To submit oneself in this way with sincerity means that there is at least faith (*saddhā*), dependence and acquiescence, which for a man of devotional disposition is of some value. As for the teacher, he is rather practical about it all. He observes the behaviour, manners, mentality, and disposition of the pupil rather than just trusting his words. In certain centres this ritual is designed to create a relationship based on materialistic interests: and it has in fact been claimed that this ritual, which is of later date, was instituted and maintained purely in order to take advantage of pupils in one way or another. Teachers in olden times, not having any such ritual, were fortunately immune to such charges. They held, in accordance with the principles laid down by the Buddha, that Nirvāṇa (that is to say, guidance towards Nirvāṇa) must be given free and with open hands. They recognized that Nirvāṇa is nobody's property, belonging only to nature, and so they had no compelling rituals of this sort. Meaningless in itself, this ritual of submission to the teacher is nothing but an obstacle

to the attainment of Nirvāṇa. It is contrary to the spirit of the teaching that “one is one’s own refuge” (*attā hi attano nātho*).

If a would-be meditator has no confidence in a teacher, or if, after enquiries and personal observation he considers a teacher of no help to him then he should not waste time and trouble on this ceremony of submission. The important thing is for teacher and disciple to understand each other well. Once they have come to understand each other, any performance or ceremony becomes immaterial. If a person feels like performing the ritual of submission to the teacher, he may as well do so; if not, why bother? Think this over and you will see that it is precisely such ritualism that makes people of other religions, who have a leaning towards Buddhism, shake their heads and lose interest. They look down on such ceremonies as naive, animistic, fit only for Stone Age man. Such ceremonial conforms more with the faith-based doctrines of theistic religions than with the spirit of the Buddha’s teaching, based as it is on insight and aimed at destroying attachment to “me” and “mine.” So if the meditator does perform this ceremony of submission in order to

avoid friction with other people who still cling to it, let him do so — fully aware, however, that it is merely a ceremony and has nothing to do with the spirit of Buddhism, which is opposed to all irrational submission.

What is really needed is a close bond of friendship between disciple and teacher which allows the teacher to use harsh language while teaching, if need be, and to demand from the disciple anything he wishes in the way of practice. At a higher level, this close bond should be one of affection based on reason, insight, and compassion. Teacher and disciple should not, however, be *too* much attached to each other. They also should not lack confidence in each other — otherwise troubles may arise which will be detrimental to the practice in general. The ceremony as discussed here is a low-level practice for people just introduced to Buddhism. In the days of the Buddha there existed no trace of such ritual. It sprang up only when teachers of later days wished to formalize every step.

(7) *Asking for the meditation object*: There exist set ways of asking for the object to be used for the

mental training, for example: "*Nibbānassa me bhante sacchikaraṇatthāya kammaṭṭhānaṃ dehi,*" which means "Venerable Sir, give me a meditation object by means of which to realize Nirvāṇa." This is, of course, similar in form to the ritual of taking the Precepts. On thinking it over we see that to ask for a meditation object or *Kammaṭṭhāna* in the same way as one asks for the Precepts reduces the status of the meditation object to that of the Precepts. This is, then, just another confidence-boosting ritual for the man of devotional temperament. The man of intelligent temperament would find the repeated performance of such rites against his disposition.

This formal asking for the meditation object is mere ritualism devoid of any rational basis, though it is true that it may be accompanied by worthwhile questions and answers regarding the object. Too much formalism becomes tiresome. The main reason why sectarian divisions develop is that some people do things which others consider ridiculous. So it is worthwhile to re-assess how many rituals ought to be performed, in which situations, and by what type of people. Do not be attached to rituals and do not perform them unintelligently and super-

stitiously so that discerning people find it all ridiculous and the performer himself achieves nothing. Here it should be noted and borne well in mind that the destruction of superstitious clinging to rites and rituals (*sīlabbatta-parāmāsa*) happens to be one of the main objectives of the mental training.

The Pali formula for asking for the meditation object was obviously designed on the lines of the procedure of asking for ordination — now popular in Ceylon but not known at the time of the Buddha — "Ordain me for the purpose of realizing Nirvāṇa..." This formula does have value insofar as it is in keeping with the spirit of meditation practice. It is a safeguard against wrong motives when asking for a meditation object. It reminds the meditator of the fact that the practice is intended for the sole purpose of realizing Nirvāṇa. People with the wrong motives meditate in order to enlarge the ego: to be reborn in some heaven, to attain some special status, or to become a superman and show off their personal attainments, or to gain name and fame, or to impress others. The meditator has to realize that to practise in order to attain psychic powers such as clairaudience and clairvoyance is to go astray. The Buddha stressed time and

time again that the life of renunciation proclaimed by him is solely for the attainment of freedom from suffering, for the realization of Nirvāṇa, and not for anything lower or other than this. The life of renunciation does not have as its ultimate aim the perfection of morality, or the attainment of concentration, or the gaining of the various kinds of "knowledge-and-vision." The Buddha declared that all these superficial aspects of the life of renunciation are just chaff; its ultimate aim is Nirvāṇa, which he likened to the kernel, the very essence. If the meditator takes these words of the Buddha seriously nothing undesirable will happen.

It is advisable that anyone who wishes to practise should acquire beforehand some understanding of Nirvāṇa, albeit a purely theoretical one; with the help of such an understanding he can more directly concentrate on or aim at Nirvāṇa. The best thing is, however, for the meditator to have some insight into suffering and to wish to be free from it by whatever means—just as a man whose head is being held under water wishes at all costs to get his head out of the water to breathe. If a person wishes to be free from suffering as fervently as that man wishes to get

his head above water, that is a sure guarantee that he will practise with right intention. So when the meditator formally asks for a meditation object saying "*…nibbānassa…*" let him he fully aware of this, the true aim of the practice. Then the ritual will not be meaningless; it will serve as a constant reminder that the practice is meant *only* for the attaining of Nirvāṇa.

(8) "*Inviting*" *the meditation object*: Some training centres and some people have become so strongly attached to ritualism that they have lost their common sense and actually personify various inanimate things. They give people to believe that each individual meditation object is a divine being, a god. Not only that, they even personify and name the various experiences arising in the course of meditation practice. For instance, the various kinds of "rapture" (*pīti*) are individualized under such names as "the Venerable Uplifting-Rapture "(*Phra Ubbeṅga-Pīti*), "the Venerable Pervading-Rapture" (*Phra Pharaṇā-Pīti*), and "the Venerable Mindfulness-of-Breathing" (*Phra Ānāpāna-Sati*). They go so far as to request this or that "Venerable Sir" of their choice to do them favours: As a result there exist wordy invita-

tion formulas which flatteringly list the attributes of the various "divine Beings" and culminate in prayers for favour. All these practices tend to be animistic or "Tantric," concerned with spirits and ghosts; it is practices of this sort that result in the permanent splitting off of sects. This sort of personification is common even in the lands where Theravada is dominant, where it is claimed that Buddhism is flourishing and "pure." It is even more pronounced in certain Mahāyāna sects, which have gone so far as to become confused with other religions and have assumed forms so strange that one cannot recognize them as Buddhist sects at all.

Thinking it over one sees that all these practices are worthless and belong with the defilements of craving and attachment; insofar as they do satisfy, it is only because they conduce to faith. The practice of personifying is, then, just one more form of ritual. It conflicts with the way of practice that existed at the time of the Buddha, which was based exclusively on wisdom and was far removed from the defilements of craving and the like. If there is to be any inviting, the meditator would do better to invite *himself* by arousing himself to be determined, enthusiastic,

and energetic. He ought to invite himself to be mindful at all times and in particular to develop within himself the four Bases of Success (*iddhipāda*), namely zeal, energy, will-power, and investigation. If he has invited himself in this manner, his practice will bear fruit just as if he had been successful in inviting the meditation object to bless him. Personification of the Dhamma by meditators in olden days seems to have been simply a means of teaching Dhamma at a certain time and place and to a certain group of people who by nature believed everything to be possessed of magic power. Such beliefs are now outmoded.

(9) *Radiating loving-kindness* (*mettā*): The custom of radiating loving-kindness towards all living beings before beginning, the practice proper has been handed down to us through many channels — some based on reason and insight and some on faith and superstition. But the method of radiating loving-kindness and the word used while doing so are constant. The most commonly used formula is: "May all creatures, all living things, all beings, be free from hatred, difficulties, and troubles, and may they live in happiness!"

Anyone who “radiates loving-kindness” out of superstition or fear has the wrong motivation altogether. He “radiates loving-kindness” because he has been told that unless he does so the spirits are likely to create trouble, or the hungry ghosts will want a share of the merits, or the celestial beings will not help and support him. In such a case the practice is wrongly motivated and completely out of keeping with its intended purpose. Sometimes the names of particular spirits of celestial beings are mentioned towards whom the “loving-kindness” is being radiated, in the hope that they may in their turn help the performer of the rite. Thus people pray and curry favour, using “loving-kindness” and the resulting “merits” to bribe those supposedly able to help. It is only through fear that such forms of practice have come into existence and the original objective of the practice lost sight of.

Some forms of “radiating loving-kindness” are phrased in an amusing way, for instance: “May I be happy, free from suffering hatred, difficulties, and troubles, and may I live in happiness!” This really reflects fear and self-love on the part of the speaker. How could a person with such a weak mind ever put

forth the effort necessary to realize impermanence, unsatisfactoriness, and non-selfhood? With this kind of ritual he will only disturb his mind all the more. That some people on a strict meditation course, see dreadful visions and become mentally deranged or even go completely mad is most probably due to fear of this kind. Some people are so attached to wrong ideas, so misguided, that they become frightened without reason. To practise meditation in a state of fear is bound to result in conflict, which may in turn lead to mental derangement. The meditator must understand the true meaning of "radiating loving-kindness" before beginning to practise it; only then can he profit by it and avoid these conflicts and troubles.

In radiating loving-kindness towards all beings including his enemies the meditator should reflect: "Now I shall not cherish any feeling of enmity against anyone; I shall give up all enmity; even if someone is doing me harm or even trying to kill me, I will bear no malice." In this way he will always be free from fear, even if he is practising in a lonely, unprotected place. He should feel also that he is everybody's friend, or that everybody is his partner

in the enterprise of mental development, because his practice is intended to end the suffering of all beings as well as of himself. The meditator should think of all beings surrounding him as friends who fully support his practice.

(10) *Reciting the virtues of the Triple Gem*: At some meditation centres the meditator is required to recite the virtues of Buddha, Dhamma, and Sangha before beginning the practice. The three famous formulas, beginning with the words "Itipi so…," "(*Svākkhāto…*," and "*Supaṭipanno…*," are generally recited without thought for their meaning. Some people have no idea of their meaning, so that the reciting of them becomes another mere ritual. In some cases it even becomes a superstition, when people invoke the virtues of the Triple Gem to protect themselves during the practice. They actually believe the Triple Gem has some strange power and regard the Pali phrases as holy, magical formulas. If, however, a person recollects sincerely and faithfully the virtues of the Triple Gem — rather than just reciting or chanting them — in order to develop joy and delight in the practice, that is, of course, in order. The meditator who wishes to observe this custom should

be sufficiently careful and discriminating not to take this reciting of the virtues of the Triple Gem as an invocation to some powerful spirit or ghost. He should not superstitiously make the Buddha into a supernatural being.

The meditator should reflect: "That I have been living a righteous life up to now, unhindered, favoured with the chance to practise for higher achievements, is all due to the virtues of the Triple Gem. Henceforth I shall live my life in conformity with the Triple Gem; I shall attain the ultimate goal of life by devoting my whole being to the Triple Gem." Recollecting the virtues of Buddha, Dhamma, and Sangha in this way, he will have the joy, delight, zeal, and energy to practise earnestly.

(11) *Resolving to practise*: This custom is meant to strengthen the will-power and make the meditator more firm and resolute in his practice. He should make himself feel at ease by recollecting that all the Ariyans or "Noble Ones," including the Buddha himself, have trodden this very path of practice that he is now about to follow. He should say inwardly: "The practice by way of which the Buddha and his disci-

ples have attained Nirvāṇa is Mindfulness, the one and only way, which each individual must follow for himself.” Having thus reassured himself that mindfulness or *satipaṭṭhāna*, which he is about to practise, is the one true way, the meditator firmly resolves to persevere in his practice. This is the sole objective of this custom. But people who are attached to the idea of magical powers cannot help twisting the meaning of even this custom. They take it as a sort of submission, which is of course completely wrong. Apparently an ever-present instinctive need to change and distort the meaning of good customs exists in people who are timid or superstitious. This distortion of a meaningful custom demonstrates clearly how beliefs motivated by desire and based on misunderstanding can never lead to the highest insight.

Resolving to practise is something the meditator must definitely do in order to strengthen his willpower and prepare himself to practise seriously. He must receive full instructions concerning the meditation object given him and be sure it is suitable for his particular kind of mental imperfections and suffering and able to solve effectively his various prob-

lems. Only when he has such an understanding and confidence will his resolve to practise be meaningful. This way of strengthening will-power is required not only for the practice of mental training but for doing any kind of work at all. But as a preliminary to mental training, it is based on precise and definite principles. The more the trainee studies, and especially the more he practises, the more his will-power is strengthened, so that he has no difficulty living up to his resolutions. For the trainee to look to the Buddha or anyone else to help him keep his resolution to practise is once again mere superstitious ritualism. He must move ever forward, never backward into the abyss of ignorance, never living in the world of magical powers. Every step of the meditator's practice must be guided by all the reason, intelligence, and insight he has at his disposal.

(12) *Paying homage to the Buddha by way of practice*: This custom is observed every day or each time when the practice is over. The meditator, so to speak, makes his practice his offering in homage to the Buddha or the Triple Gem. This is *paṭipatti-pūjā*, paying homage by practice. It is the highest kind of homage and contrasts with *āmisa-pūjā*, paying hom-

age by offering material gifts. Each time when the practice is over the meditator recites three times: "*Imāya-dhammānudhamma-paṭipatti-pūjā buddhaṃ dhammaṃ saṅghaṃ pūjemi*," "I pay homage to Buddha, Dhamma, and Sangha by practising Dhamma in conformity with Dhamma." Clearly this custom was designed in conformity with the Buddha's words praising the person who pays homage to him by way of his own practice rather than by offering gifts. Meditation is the highest form of practice, so for a meditator to observe this custom is praiseworthy and rational — unless of course he follows it blindly and just for the sake of tradition. This *paṭipatti-pūjā* is the last thing to be done each day when the practice is over.

Of the various customs and rites so far discussed some can be seen to have come into being as a result of the imperfections and desires of teachers and their disciples, who have either introduced new rites of their own or have changed existing ones to suit their own beliefs and wishes. The meditator must carefully judge these various rites, keeping in mind the true purpose of meditation. Only then can they be conducive to success in his practice and not just

blind faith or superstition. Unless the meditator discriminates in this way these rituals may conflict with the development of insight, creating unnecessary trouble for him, making him the laughing-stock of discriminating people, or even, in an extreme case, sending him mad. If the meditator is not careful and circumspect in this matter of traditional practices it will harm not only himself but the Buddhist religion as a whole.

To sum up, the practices classed as Preliminaries to the mental training proper are not by any means all mere ritualism — provided their significance is correctly understood. Some of them are duties incumbent on the meditator and some are techniques for strengthening the mind so that it can make smooth progress. Each practice has its own virtue, its own purpose. The meditator must be cautious and try to discern the true meaning of each of them.

In applying the techniques particularly designed to strengthen will-power, the meditator must, if he is to achieve success, be well aware of his own mental make-up or temperament. He may use techniques other than those mentioned here, such as reflecting

on death; or on the limited time he has in which to attain the best thing attainable by man; or on the virtues of his benefactors, for instance his parents; or on his duty to practise earnestly for the sake of others, to spread the Dhamma and, by way of example, to guide others along the path to Freedom. All such devices may be resorted to in order to strengthen the mind. The important point is, however, that the meditator should feel certain that he is doing just what he ought to be doing, and doing it properly.

All these Preliminaries have to be taken into account by the person preparing himself to practise meditation.

Chapter II

Environment

The trainee in *ānāpānasati* must have a clear idea of the practice as a whole, deriving what help he can from metaphors. The teachers of old were very fond of metaphors; for instance, in his introductory verse the writer of the "Path of Purification" (*Visuddhi-Magga*) describes the practice as follows:

> "The wise man, standing firm on the ground, takes up the edged weapon in his hands, sharpens it on the stone, and, working diligently, succeeds in clearing away the thick jungle."

The "wise man" is anyone with inborn insight (*sahajāta-paññā*) *or* what is nowadays called intelligence. This is an immature form of insight which has to be developed into true and genuine insight (*vipassanā-paññā*). The person who is to take up the mental training has to be sufficiently sharp to develop further intuitive insight. A dull person can-

not take up the practice in the way dealt with here. As a rule he has first to follow the way based on faith or resort to the various kinds of rites and rituals.

Although possessed of intelligence, the meditator must "stand firm on the ground," the ground of moral discipline (*sīla*). He must be well established in moral discipline so as to be free from the coarser type of defects and free from suffering caused by the things about him. Moral discipline is compared to ground that is firm and solid enough to stand on securely, as opposed to muddy ground or treacherous, marshy ground. Anyone who earnestly wishes to undertake mental training, irrespective of whether he is *a bhikkhu* or a layman, must make the ground of morality clean enough to stand on.

The "edged weapon" is worldly wisdom, the various kinds of understanding that come from study, especially those relating to mental development. By a process of "sharpening" this mundane wisdom is transformed into supramundane wisdom which is penetrating enough to put an end to the Fetters (*saṃyojana*) and the Inherent Tendencies (*anusaya*). The "hands" are *parihārika-paññā*, "operative in-

sight," the type of insight that shows a person wandering on in *saṃsāra* just what he has to do. It means natural insight so developed that one realizes exactly what has to be done and how to do it. The "stone" is concentration. Concentration must be practised before insight; it is the basis for wisdom and insight (*vipassanā*). Concentration, whether natural or consciously developed, is the stone on which the weapon is sharpened.

"Diligence" implies the Four Bases of Power (*iddhi-pāda*), which are; willingness and earnestness in what one does; determination, that is, taking the practice seriously; keen interest in the practice, that is, devotion to the practice from beginning to end without any deviation; spirit of enquiry accompanied by clear comprehension to solve intelligently and in time any problem that may arise in the course of the practice. These four Bases of Power, aspiration, energy, concentration, and investigation (*chanda*, *viriya*, *citta*, *vimaṃsā*), are essential for success. The "thick jungle" is the tangle of mental defilements. These defilements pierce and prick just as does the thorny undergrowth in a thick jungle. To succeed in clearing away the thick jungle is to clear away the cluttering

undergrowth of defilements as one would clumps of thorny bamboo, thick inextricably interwoven.

These metaphors outline the way of practice and also clarify the inter-relationships between the various wholesome qualities (morality and so on). They serve to clear up misunderstanding and also to give encouragement to practise.

"The wise man, standing firm on the ground, takes up the edged weapon in his hands, sharpens it on the stone, and working diligently, succeeds in clearing away the thick jungle." This formula must always be clear to the inner eye of anyone who practises.

A person who has made up his mind to take up mental training has first to get rid of the Impediments. The Impediments (*palibodha*) are physical things big and small that may tie the meditator down in various ways. The following are the ten well-known examples of Impediments:

(1) Dwelling (*āvāsa-palibodha*): Here the meditator is concerned about his dwelling, worried

about where he is to live — and also about the comfortable monastery and quarters that he has to abandon in order to train in the forest or elsewhere. The Impediment of Dwelling even includes concern with responsibilities to the small hut in which one is to practise, such as getting rid of termites, mending a leaking roof, or anything else that may need taking care of. All these are Impediments, obstacles in the way of the practice. The meditator must solve all of these problems completely right at the outset so that once he has started to practise there is nothing for him to be concerned about whatsoever. Clearly, then, it is better for a beginner to go and practise in a completely new environment where nothing belongs to him. Better still is to practise under a tree rather than in a hut — though the tree chosen must be in a secluded place where the meditator will not be disturbed by curious onlookers. If he cannot find such a tree, he must just remain indifferent, taking no notice of anyone who may come to stare. Living under a tree gets completely rid of the Impediment of Dwelling.

(2) Family (*kula-palibodha*): This Impediment consists in concern on the part of the meditator regarding

his supporters the people who maintain and help him in any way: worry about their perhaps being ill, missing them if unable to meet them every day, and so on. Affection and attachment to supporters is bound to be a cause of worry. The meditator must change his mental attitude in such a way that for him his supporters are, for the time being, as if no longer alive.

(3) Worldly gain (*lābha-palibodha*): Here the meditator is afraid of losing advantages he had before taking up the practice. Included under this Impediment is the feeling of expectation of still more gain, name, fame, and so on after completing the practice. Taken together, these all amount to fear of loss. The meditator must clearly see gain, name, and fame as repulsive because detrimental to the practice for the attainment of Nirvāṇa on any level. While in training the meditator must give up all possessions, past, present, and even future, and accept a life of poverty. If needs arise during the practice, he should not talk or think about them then and there but should leave them to be dealt with later.

(4) Social commitments (*gaṇa-palibodha*): This Impediment consists in concern about the people

under one's authority, care, or responsibility; such social commitments must be completely given up. The meditator must be firmly determined to live really alone. Although he is to go back to live in society at the end of the training, he must, until then, be free from all concern about such matters.

(5) *Work* (*kamma-palibodha*): Any kind of work left unfinished, for which the meditator is responsible, or of which he is extremely fond, or to which he is habituated — these are to be counted Impediments. The meditator must reflect wisely and see clearly that no work is of importance other than the present practice of mental development. No work of trifling value must be given precedence over this, the most valuable and important work of all. Or if it is possible to solve in some way the problem of a trivial job, for instance by assigning it to some suitable person, then that should be done before beginning the practice.

(6) Travel (*addhāna palibodha*): Worry resulting from making journeys constitutes an impediment for two kinds of person. It is an impediment first of all, for anyone who practises while travelling. In this case

the meditator must not allow himself to be worried about anything related to his journey, such as where he is going to stay the following day, and the like. The technique for eliminating this impediment is to feel as if one is travelling only a short distance. Secondly, it is an impediment for a person who trains while staying in one place, but who enjoys travelling to distant parts. Such a person must overcome his feeling of attachment to travelling. He should, for instance, be unconcerned about the season and about the weather and should give no thought to this or that place as worth seeing, worth living at, and the like. Furthermore, he should not think about past trips which he enjoyed so much. And during the Rains Retreat he should not make plans about where to go after the period of retreat is over.

(7) Relatives (*ñāti-palibodha*): Concern about kith and kin, right from father and mother down to distant relatives, can be an impediment. The meditator must not allow concern about the happiness or unhappiness of relatives, far or near, to be a stumbling block in the way of his practice. If he earnestly intends to practise, he must not let himself be influenced in any way by such things. If a monk, he

should recall that to be a monk is to renounce the world; being a monk he is understood to have completely renounced his relatives. He should further reflect that, especially during the training period, one must develop a sense of complete renunciation of everybody and everything. If a householder, the meditator should reflect that he is going in search of the *very best thing* for both himself and his relatives. Further, both monk and house-holder may reflect that no relative can help one to attain freedom from the vicious circle of *saṃsāra*. In this even the nearest relatives, parents, sons, daughters, cannot be of any help at all. Everyone has to help himself and so should be given every chance to do so. Only a person who has freed himself from the round of *saṃsāra* is in a position to help relatives still wandering on and on in *saṃsāra*. No-one can help others to become free if he is not to some extent free himself.

(8) Sickness (*ābādha-palibodha*): The meditator must not be afraid of possibly falling ill as a result of the unfamiliar way of practice and living he has adopted; and if he does fall ill while practising, and if there is no possibility of his being cured, then he should cheerfully tolerate his condition

and persevere in practice without caring for his life. The main thing is not to be worried about the possibility of future illness. The meditator should not worry about what may happen to his health, whether or not he will be able to get treatment, or where he will get medicine. He should not consider these matters of any importance. To practise mental culture is to take the medicine of immortality, which can cure the most dangerous disease of all, namely the disease of defilements and suffering. The Dhamma medicine guarantees permanent freedom from these diseases and this each one can realize within himself. Anyone who is already in bad health should lose no time in getting cured so that he does not have to be concerned about treatment while practising. If he has tried his best, using all ways and means, and has still failed to get rid of his illness, then he had better give up treatment and stop being concerned about it. The meditator must fight death by practising mental development with determination and perseverance. He must be bold, mentally strong, and not let fear of illness and death find a place in his mind at all. He must keep up his practice as long as life endures.

(9) Study (*gantha palibodha*): It is not practicable to practise mental development and study at the same time. If a person has decided to take up the practice of mental development in earnest, and if he wishes to attain the full result of the practice, he must suspend his studies. (Note that the word "study" refers here to scholarly study; it does not include the kind of study that consists in asking a good friend or meditation teacher necessary questions concerning the practice.) Anyone who is addicted to bookish learning will definitely have to give up his attachment. Likewise a teacher must give up any attachment to his teaching if he is to gain the full result of the practice.

(10) Supernormal powers (*iddhi-palibodha*): Some people become attached to the idea of gaining miraculous or magical powers, which they find very tempting. Anyone who is infatuated with the desire to possess supernormal powers and practises meditation specifically for this purpose may very easily become deranged. The meditator must get rid completely of any wish to possess supernormal powers; only then will his practice proceed directly towards the Noble Paths and Fruits, and to Nirvāṇa. This is

how to get rid of the Impediment of Supernormal Powers for those who have not yet started practice. A person who has been practising sincerely and has reached the stage where his mind is capable of performing certain psychic wonders naturally feels a strong interest in them. He then begins to cherish a desire to divert his practice towards the attainment of supernormal powers of all kinds. This is a very strong obstacle barring the way of higher practice, which is aimed at bringing insight into the three Universal Characteristics, namely Impermanence, Unsatisfactoriness, and Non-selfhood. This insight must be attained in order that Nirvāṇa may be attained; and it is not possible to attain both Nirvāṇa and supernormal powers, much as some may wish it were. It is, however, possible that a person who has, through practice, attained to the highest truth may attain supernatural powers as well, as a by-product. This is not a common phenomenon; it happens only to certain types of people under certain conditions. The way of practice leading to the attainment of supernormal powers is distinct and different from that leading to Nirvāṇa, and the two must not be confused. The meditator must be genuinely seeking Nirvāṇa and must not be after supernormal powers.

The attaining of supernormal powers is certainly a way of getting name and fame and wealth, but it is useless for the destruction of mental defilements.

The ten Impediments just discussed are examples of stumbling blocks lying in the way of mental development. To fail to clear these obstacles away is to fail to find the stone of concentration on which to sharpen the blade of insight. And without a sharp blade how can the jungle of mental defilements be cleared away? Clearing away the impediments is, then, a very important preliminary task that has to be attended to.

The meditator must know how to choose the place and environment most favourable to his practice. To be able to do this he must first of all know his own characteristics and know just what kind of environment is best suited to them. Although the training is aimed at the attainment of freedom, which implies neither liking nor disliking the environment, not being influenced by it, nevertheless a beginner must select his environment with some care. It is imperative, therefore, that the meditator should clearly understand the nature and mode of interaction of the

environment and his own character or temperament. He must know whether or not the two go well together; and if they do go together, he must know just how and to what extent.

Character or temperament is technically termed *carita*, which literally means behaviour and implies a certain set of habit patterns acquired through repeatedly behaving or reacting in certain ways over a long period. Having recognized his own *carita*, the meditator is able to create or select a suitable environment and avoid unsuitable ones. The different character types or classes of temperaments are considered to be six in number. They are: the Lustful (*rāga-carita*), the Hating (*dosa-carita*), the Dull (*moha-carita*), the Faithful (*saddhā-carita*), the Intelligent (*buddhi-carita*), and the Speculative (*vitakka-carita*). We shall now examine these six character types in turn and discuss the sort of environment suitable for each of them.

(1) *The Lustful Character-type*: This is the person whose mind is dominated by lust or desire. He feasts his eyes on anything beautiful and attractive. He is very strongly attached to tidiness and orderli-

ness. He is far too sensitive to the taste of food and very selective as regards mode and place of living. A person of this type is advised to select an environment that is untidy, dirty, and unsightly. His clothing should be of poor quality cloth and should be much patched, darned, and torn. Even his utensils should be of poor quality, dented, rough, and much mended. If the meditator is a *bhikkhu*, he should go for alms in a direction that is dirty and unsightly and where there is nothing pleasing to the eye. He should go to a poor locality where he will receive unattractive food. He should select for his alms-round a village where people are unsightly and shabby and give in a rough and unpleasing manner. As to posture, he should remain as far as possible in the postures of walking and standing and should avoid sitting and lying. He should take great care to apply the same principle to all other things, doing nothing that might arouse lust or strong attachment. The articles he uses should be coloured blue or some similar dark hue. If he wishes to use one of the colour *kasiṇas* as his concentration object, he should choose the blue one. To sum up, all the different things the meditator of lustful temperament has to do with should be displeasing, ugly, unat-

tractive, and rough, since such qualities are suitable and favourable to his practice. If he does not realize the importance of this whole matter, difficulties will arise unnecessarily in one way or another with regard to his nature *carita*, and will be an obstacle of progress in his meditation.

(2) *The Hating Character-type*: This is the person who easily becomes angry, who is short-tempered and liable to become irritated without reason. The environment recommended for this type is just the reverse of the one beneficial to the Lustful type. It is recommended that the person of hating character-type should create, or live in, an environment where everything is tidy, orderly, beautiful, and pleasing to the eye. His dwelling should be perfectly neat and clean, spick and span, free from anything irritating. His clothing should be of fine quality, of pleasing colour, not smelly and of smooth, superior material. If a *bhikkhu* he should go for-alms to a village that is very clean and tidy and where the people are cultured and well-mannered. The environment he lives in should be in no way depressing but suitably clean, orderly, and tidy. He should spend more time sitting and lying down than standing and walking.

Other minor things should be arranged along the lines already indicated. As to colour, he should give preference to dark green, the least stimulating of all the colours.

(3) *The Dull Character-type*: This is the type of person who is slothful and always feels sleepy and inactive. By nature he is not at all lively or wide awake. It is recommended that the environment suitable to this type of person should be clear, bright, open and spacious. The lodgings, for instance, should have a view rather than being shut in, and should be light and sunny. Clothing should be of fine quality, as for the hating type. Food should also be as in the case of the hating type. The utensils and other objects used by the dull character type should be of large size. Even the *kasiṇa* he concentrates on should be as large as he can make it. Of the four postures he is advised to remain in the postures of standing and walking more than in the other two.

(4) *The Faithful Character-type*: This is the person who readily believes, trusts, accepts on faith alone without much understanding of the matter in

question. For this type all the directions given for the hating type apply. In addition it would be beneficial for the faithful type to live in an environment that stimulates his thinking power or intellect. He should also live near or associate with someone who can advise him and stimulate his imagination in the proper way.

(5) *The Intelligent Character-type*: This is the person who always wants to know, study, and think to increase his knowledge. For this type there is almost no problem with regard to environment. All the directions given for the other types are suitable for the intelligent type since he can adapt himself to any environment. In fact nothing specific need be said about him at all.

(6) *The Speculative Character-type*: This is the person whose mind easily becomes restless, but not in an intelligent way. His thinking is restless without having any direction or guiding principle. He wanders and is not certain of anything. The environment suitable for this type is one that does not stimulate or encourage thinking and does not cause confusion and create further problems. His

dwelling must be small, but neat and clean and sufficiently light. He should have only a few simple essential things and should not associate with people who indulge in meaningless talk. All other things such as posture and colour should be as for the lustful type.

Summing up, the lustful type is dominated by desire and must use unpleasant things as an antidote. The hating type readily becomes angry, and must use clean neat and beautiful things as an antidote. The dull type is deluded; as an antidote he needs spacious, open, bright living quarters. The faithful type believes too readily; for him the antidote consists in following definite and orderly principles. The intelligent type stresses understanding; he should use his own intelligence and think for himself. The speculative type should use as an antidote environmental conditions that stimulate thinking. When the meditator has examined himself and come to know his own nature or temperament correctly, he will be able to select a suitable environment without much difficulty and thus be largely self-reliant in his practice. Moreover he can even choose the concentration object best suited to his nature. If he is of the lustful

type he should use one of the ten Loathsome Objects (*asubha-kammaṭṭhāna*); if of the hating type one of the four Sublime Abodes (*brahma-vihāra*) or Illimitables (*appamaññā*); the dull type should choose Analysis of the Four Elements (*catudhātu-vavaṭṭhāna*); the faithful type should choose one of the ten Recollections (*anussati*) such as Recollection of the Dhamma; for the intelligent type these is no specification; the speculative type should choose an object of calming or pacifying nature such as Mindfulness of Breathing or a *kasiṇa* disc. The Buddha did say, however, that Mindfulness of Breathing (*ānāpānasati*) is suited to every character type.

If a person shows a variety of temperaments, he should, in selecting his meditation object, consider first the dominant one; then he can consider the next strongest.

Having dealt with the conditions "inside," that is, the different character types, we must now speak about conditions "outside." As a guide to selecting a suitable environment we shall discuss the so-called *sappāya-dhammā*, or Things Beneficial to the Practice. They are reckoned as seven, namely: Suitable Dwelling,

"Resort," Speech, People, Food, Climate, and Posture. These seven will now be discussed one by one.

(1) A *Suitable Dwelling* is a place that is convenient to live in. Besides being suited to the character type as discussed above, the dwelling selected should be as follows: Not too big (otherwise it will require too much care), not too new (otherwise a lot has to be done to maintain it), not dilapidated (for a dilapidated building presents danger both in itself and in the form of the reptiles and other vermin it harbours), not on a road-side (in order to be free from disturbance from traffic and visitors), not near a public well or tank (to be free from disturbance by people coming to drink or draw water—especially people of the opposite sex), not near a place where edible leaves and vegetables grow (for otherwise there will be disturbance from people collecting them—especially people of the opposite sex), and not at a place where there are useful flowers and fruits (for the same reason). It should not be a famous shrine (since it would then be frequented by pilgrims coming to pay homage). It should not be near a city (because a city is a source of all manner of disturbance and inconvenience) and not near a source of firewood or near arable fields (since there

would probably be disturbance from noise or the people themselves). Preferably it should not be near things or persons that are in any way unsuitable (such as hot-tempered people, members of the opposite sex, and so on). It should not be near a landing place (because there people are constantly coming and going), not too far up-country (since the people there may not be disposed to give support and may even misunderstand and give trouble), and not on the frontier of the kingdom (since that area is strictly checked by the authorities in charge, and there would be the possibility of the meditator's being adversely affected in case of a border conflict). Lastly, the dwelling should not be in a place where the seven Suitable Things are unavailable and where neither a good friend nor a meditation teacher can be contacted. All these examples of things to be avoided provide a basis for deciding on the best place to stay, particularly in the case of a *bhikkhu*. When the meditator has found a place free from all these faults, he is said to have a Suitable Dwelling. The term "Suitable Dwelling" may imply a whole village, a whole forest, a whole monastery, or a part of it, or just a single hut, cottage, a cave, the foot of a tree, a valley, or even the meditator's own room. Briefly put, the meditator should live

in a place free from disturbance and favourable to the practice of mental development.

(2) A *Suitable "Resort"* is a place where the meditator can conveniently obtain his food and such other necessities as facilities of communication, especially those required for his practice. The important point about the "Resort" is that food should be obtainable there without too much difficulty, and that there should be no unfavourable objects. Particularly to be avoided are objects poisonous to the mind, the sort that harm the mind, objects that depress, that may lead to ruminating over past experiences and perhaps eventually bring about a return to the worldly way of life. The commentaries compare the meditator looking for a suitable "resort" to a cow looking for a suitable pasture.

(3) *Suitable Speech* is speech that is conducive to success. It is talk that is good and profitable, talk that may resolve doubts and encourage the meditator to practise, talk that is agreeable to his temperament. Even the calls of certain kinds of animals may or may not be agreeable, let alone the talk of human beings. Noisy and clamorous sounds and also allur-

ing sounds are to regarded as Unsuitable. By contrast talk that encourages and gladdens the meditator, that strengthens and inspires him in his practice, will add to his knowledge and understanding of his duty and is to be considered Suitable. Most particularly are the words of a good friend to be regarded as Suitable Speech.

(4) *Suitable People*: The people around the meditator — teacher, friends, fellow trainees, and supporters, both men and women — are Suitable if they are able to get on well together and live in harmony. The function of the teacher is to uplift the meditator; the function of his companions, his fellow wayfarers, is to provide company for him and make him feel secure; the function of the lay supporters is to help him along so that he makes quick and smooth progress. This is what is meant by Suitable People.

(5) *Suitable Food* is food that suits the temperament of the meditator in the ways mentioned above under "Character-types." To be suitable the food must nourish the body and protect it from illness; and of course the meditator must eat it correctly, mindful of its true purpose. Whether the food is to

be vegetarian or not, whether it is to include fruit or starches, and so on, depends on time, place, and personal preferences and ideas. No general rule can be laid down for all people; but if the food the meditator gets is just what his body and mind require, that food is to be regarded as definitely suitable.

(6) *Suitable Climate* implies a favourable season, a time of year that provides good environment, good scenery, good weather, and the like. The choice of climate will be made under either of two conditions: If the meditator is going to practise for only a limited period or if he is about to practise for the first time, he should select the best season possible. In this case there will be ample opportunity to select time and place. If, on the other hand he is practising continuously, he has very little choice. He may, however, select a season in which to practise one particular aspect of the training more strictly than usual. And in either case he may, if conditions permit, move to a locality where atmospheric conditions are such as to constitute Suitable Climate. The meditator may decide for example where he will live in summer, where in winter, and where during the rainy season. Or if he is not in a position to move

from one place to another, he may adjust his residence in such a way as to achieve the same result.

(7) *Suitable Posture* is any one of the four postures—sitting, lying, standing, and walking—that is beneficial to the practice. Which particular posture is to be preferred can be discovered by personal experiment. The meditator must find out in which posture his mind can most easily become concentrated and remain so. Having found his Suitable Posture, he should keep to it. Once he has become proficient in concentration he can use the remaining three postures as well so that he can develop one-pointedness regardless of posture.

Summing up, all these seven Suitable Things are things immediately related to the meditator that are favourable to his practice. They can on no account be ignored. The seven are, once again: Abode, Resort, Speech, People, Food, Climate, and Posture. The better the meditator is able to select them the more cheerful and fresh he will be, the more free of tiredness and boredom with the practice. Hence these seven are recognized as things to be carefully studied and attended to.

Chapter III

Theoretical Background

Two kinds of preparation are needed for the practice of meditation or mental development (*bhāvanā*). First the meditator must have technical know-how, theoretical understanding. With a sufficient theoretical understanding he is able to practise along the right lines without going astray. Having prepared himself by studying the theory, the meditator can decide what kind of practical preparation is needed, and how much. Then he has to put it all into practice.

The general theoretical points that the meditator must know have been listed under eight headings, as follows:

(1) *What is concentration*? This can be answered in various ways depending on whether one has in mind the actual work of meditation, the course of meditation, or the result of working on the meditation object. Any one of these three can be called con-

centration (*samādhi*). The definition of concentration given in the texts is this: “a wholesome mind steadily fixed on an object.” In this definition concentration is considered as the result. The term “concentration” can, however also cover the mental work that will give rise to this wholesome mind steadily fixed on its object. Actually the term “wholesome” is much more important that “steadily fixed on an object”; because if the mind happens to be unwholesome, then, even though it may be steadily fixed on an object, the result is *wrong* concentration. For this reason the object used for the practice of concentration must be one that can serve as the basis for a wholesome mind. Furthermore the motives for practising concentration must be pure from the very outset, and, as mentioned before, must be based on insight and right view.

(2) *What is the technical meaning of “concentration”?* Technically speaking concentration is the firm establishing of the mind (*citta*) and the mental factors (*cetasika*). The mind is firmly established because the mental factors coexisting with it are wholesome and make it so established. The expression “firmly established” implies that the mind is

fixed on one single object, not disturbed by any other object, and not dominated by any of the hindrances or defilements.

(3) *What are the characteristic, function, manifestation, and proximate cause of concentration*? The characteristic of concentration is non-distraction; its function is overcoming of distraction, and hence the attainment of calm; its manifestation is non-wavering; and its proximate cause is happiness. It should be remembered that there must always be satisfaction, ease, cheerfulness, joy—in a word, happiness. Happiness is the proximate cause of concentration.

(4) *How many kinds of concentration are there*? This is a purely theoretical point, really just a matter of linguistic convention, and we need not concern ourselves with it over-much. The following brief account will suffice for our purposes: Concentration may be regarded as of just *one kind*, namely, the state of mind which is firmly established. Or it may be regarded as of *two kinds* if we classify it as mundane and supramundane, or as access concentration and full concentration (*upacāra-* and *appanā-*

samadhi); and there are several other pairs of this type. Again, concentration is of *three kinds* if we classify it as inferior, medium, and superior. We may also classify it into *four kinds*, each accompanied by one of the four Bases of Accomplishment (*iddhipāda*). And it is divided into *five kinds* on the basis of the *jhāna* factors. All these classifications are of purely theoretical interest.

(5) *What is the defilement of concentration*? In the language of the texts the defilement of concentration is the state of mind that reverts to sensuality and the unwholesome. This is concentration on the mundane level, which can still relapse and, deteriorate if not well guarded.

(6) *What is the cleansing of concentration*? The answer is: the state of mind precisely the opposite of the one just mentioned, in other words a mind free from defilements and worries, always radiant because accompanied by mental factors (*cetasika*) belonging to the category of insight.

(7) *How is concentration to be developed*? This is concerned purely with practice. We shall deal with it

in detail later and here merely sum it up briefly as follows: Purify conduct, eliminate the various impediments, approach a teacher in the right way, study well, receive a concentration object, live in a place suitable for practice, remove minor impediments, and then develop the concentration object. This last will be dealt with in a separate chapter.

(8) *What is the benefit of concentration*? The meditator must know in advance the benefit or fruit that will be obtained from what he is going to do. Such knowledge, apart from being a continual source of inspiration, is a necessary foundation, which helps prepare the way to the goal. Because concentration is of several kinds, the benefits derived from it are also various. In the texts we find that five benefits of concentration are listed. These are:

(a) Happiness here and now (*diṭṭha-dhammika-sukha*). This is experienced by anyone whose mind is concentrated, but in particular by fully purified beings (*arahants*), who enter concentration in order to rest.

(b) Insight (*vipassanā*). Each of the various states of concentration is a basis for insight,

that is, seeing impermanence, unsatisfactoriness, and non-selfhood so penetratingly that the mind is freed from clinging.

(c) Higher knowledge: This differs from insight. A person who has gained insight may not necessarily have higher knowledge. Far more preparation and concentration practice of a specific kind is necessary before higher knowledge can arise. Higher knowledge here refers to various kinds of psychic power (*iddhi-vidhi*) of a wholesome nature.

(d) Attainment to a supernormal plane of existence. This generally refers to the "Brahma world" (*Brahma-loka*). Concentration at all levels raises the mind to planes of existence higher than that of the sensual world (*kāma-loka*). But merely aiming for the Brahma world is not in keeping with the spirit of the Buddha's teaching which aims at *transcending* existence, at completely *destroying* the "circle of becoming." Unfortunately the aims of pre- and non-Buddhist meditation practices are always being confused with the true and ultimate aim of Buddha-dhamma. The meditator must under-

stand this point and keep it in mind because there is a possibility that, without realizing it, he may start craving for and clinging to life in the Brahma world. The danger of clinging is much greater here than in the case of (c) above.

(e) Attainment of "extinction" (*nirodha-samāpatti*). This is the highest of all the "extraordinary achievements." It can be described, as a form of the Happiness of Freedom (*vimutti-sukha*). This attainment is reserved exclusively for some types of Non-returners (*anāgāmi*) and for fully liberated beings. (arahants). It is not to be aspired for by all, being inaccessible to the general run of people. There is, therefore, no need to discuss it here in detail. Although this list of five benefits was made by teachers of quite a late date, it is of value in helping a meditator to decide which kind of concentration he is going to practise.

Now we deal with the second aspect of preparation for the practice. Certain rules have been prescribed as a guide in preparing for the practice of mundane concentration, that is, concentration by persons other than Ariyans, "Noble Ones."

(1) *Purification of moral conduct.* This means giving up any kind of conduct that leads to hesitation and self-reproach. This point has already been dealt with in CHAPTER I under "confession of offences" and need not be discussed further.

(2) *Elimination of the various Impediments.* This too has been explained already (see CHAPTER II).

(3) *Approaching a "good friend"* (*kalyāṇa-mitta*) *or meditation teacher.* In the texts lengthy explanations are given on this point. But all those explanations apply to a particular place, period, and culture, namely that of the country where the various manuals of practice were written. Hence we cannot take all those explanations and apply them directly, to the letter; to insist on doing that would be superstitious and ridiculous, as we mentioned in the very beginning. Briefly, one must choose an appropriate time and place for contacting the teacher in order, first of all, to crate a feeling of respect and trust and secondly, to let him know just what one wants. Patience is recommended; it may even take some months before the various things have been carefully and subtly done by both teacher and disciple.

Nothing should be done in a short-cut manner as is the fashion these days. That things must be allowed to take their course is self-evident. For instance, it takes a long time for a teacher to get to know the temperament of his pupil; he can do this only if the pupil serves and attends on him over a period.

Another thing to do is to find out how much opportunity there will be for contact with the teacher. If the disciple is to practise at the teacher's residence, there is no problem, since he can easily consult the teacher whenever doubt arises. But if he has to stay at a place far away, there must be preparation as to the instructions to be received, their quantity and frequency — all of which it is the teacher's duty to decide. Detailed advice has been given based on the way of life prevailing in olden days. It is said that the disciple should visit the teacher once every two days, every three days, or every seven days after the alms-round, and, having eaten at the teacher's, return to his dwelling-place. This is how it was done in ancient times, in keeping with the way of life prevailing then. Such customs should still be taken into consideration nowadays and adapted to present-day needs to the best advantage. If the meditator lives

far away in the country-side, he is advised first to make arrangement for receiving the concentration object (*kammaṭṭhāna*) and to contact the teacher afterwards in the proper way. It is up to us to adapt as necessary all these traditional practices. If all this is not arranged properly confusion will arise, which will be difficult to deal with. Consider, for instance, the advice given in the ancient manuals regarding discussion between disciple and teacher. There it is advised that when speaking to each other disciple and teacher should sit back to back at the foot of a tree; with the tree between them, and with their eyes closed. They should speak carefully, correctly, straightforwardly, and to the point, discussing only as much as is necessary. Then they should get up and leave without seeing each other's face at all. This is intended purely and simply to eliminate sources of disturbance as far as possible. Having understood the purpose of practices like this, one is in a position to make preparations for contacting the teacher. This creates good relations right from the time the pupil first meets the teacher and maintains them through the stages of receiving instructions and advice and discussing difficulties, thus ensuring unbroken progress.

(4) *Studying the concentration object* (*kammaṭṭhāna*). Meditation objects are of two kinds, general and specific. General objects are for continuous use and are not changed; specific objects are practised in order to accomplish the desired result as quickly as possible. The former class are practised every day and are chosen to suit the meditator's temperament. For example, a timid person should every day develop loving-kindness (*mettā bhāvanā*), a person of lustful character-type should daily practise meditation on repulsiveness (*asubha-kammaṭṭhāna*), and a heedless and dull type of person should daily practise recollection of death (*maraṇānussati*). *All* these general meditation objects are to be practised daily before one of the specific ones is taken up. Apart from the main meditation object the teacher decides which general object is suited to the pupil's personal needs. Every meditator should take up these two kinds of meditation object as the teacher recommends.

(5) *Suitable Dwelling.* We have already discussed at length the kind of dwelling suitable for a meditator, and there is no need to discuss it further.

(6) *Elimination of Lesser Impediments.* There are certain small jobs that the meditator should attend to before beginning to practise so that he will not need to worry about them again. Such things include having his hair cut, shaving, burning out his bowl, mending washing or dyeing his robes, taking purgative and the like as may be necessary for different individuals. The meditator should be free from worry and concern about all these things for as long as possible.

(7) *The actual practice of concentration.* The meditator begins to practise according to the method he has been given and keeps it up until he reaches the goal. The details of this will be discussed later.

Before going on to discuss the practice of mindfulness of breathing, we must pause to consider just why the breathing has been selected as the principal meditation object. Understanding this point will make the actual practice easier.

Mindfulness of breathing (*ānāpānasati*) *is* just one of the forty traditionally recognized objects of meditation. These forty are classified as follows:

(I) The *ten kasiṇas* (literally "totalities"):

(1) Earth *kasiṇa*
(2) Water *kasiṇa*
(3) Fire *kasiṇa*
(4) Air *kasiṇa*
(5) Blue *kasiṇa*
(6) Yellow *kasiṇa*
(7) Red *kasiṇa*
(8) White *kasiṇa*
(9) Light *kasiṇa*
(10) Space *kasiṇa*

(II) The ten Loathsome Objects (*asubha-kammaṭṭhāna*):

(11) Bloated corpse
(12) Livid corpse
(13) Festering corpse
(14) Corpse cut open
(15) Gnawed corpse
(16) Scattered corpse
(17) Hacked and scattered corpse
(18) Bleeding corpse
(19) Worm-infested corpse
(20) Skeleton

(iii) The ten Recollections (*anussati*):

- (21) Recollection of the Buddha
- (22) Recollection of the Dhamma
- (23) Recollection of the Sangha
- (24) Recollection of Virtue
- (25) Recollection of Generosity
- (26) Recollection of Divine Beings (i.e. of their qualities)
- (27) Recollection of Death
- (28) Recollection (or Mindfulness) of the Body
- (29) Recollection (or Mindfulness) of Breathing
- (30) Recollection of Peace (i.e. of Nirvāṇa)

(iv) The four Sublime Abodes (*Brahma-vihāra*):

- (31) Loving-kindness
- (32) Compassion
- (33) Sympathetic joy
- (34) Equanimity

(v) The four Formless Spheres (*arūpāyatana*):

- (35) Boundless space
- (36) Boundless consciousness
- (37) Nothingness
- (38) Neither-perception-nor-non-perception

(vi) (39) Repulsiveness of Food (*āhāre-paṭikūla-saññā*)

(vii) (40) Analysis of the Four Elements (*catudhātu-vavaṭṭhāna*)

With the ten *kasiṇas* the stress in on *form*; they are meant for training the mind in the psychic powers from the very beginning. The Loathsome Objects are primarily intended to overcome sensual lust. The four objects belonging to the Formless Spheres lead to what are called the Formless Absorptions (*arūpa jhāna*), high mental levels which, however, are not on the path to insight. Altogether there are forty meditation objects. The reasons for selecting the one object, mindfulness of breathing (No. 29) from among these forty are as follows:

(1) Mindfulness of breathing covers three of the four types of mental training, namely:

(a) The practice leading to Happiness Here-and-now;

(b) The practice leading to "Knowledge-and-Vision" (*ñāṇa-dassana*), of the sort called

divine, namely Divine Ear and Divine Eye (*dibba-sota*, *dibba-cakkhu*);

(c) The practice leading to Awareness and Clear Comprehension (*sati-sampajañña*);

(d) The practice leading directly to the Extinction of the Inflows (*āsava-khaya*).

Mindfulness of breathing covers completely the first, third and fourth of these types of mental training but not the second, which has in any case nothing at all to do with the overcoming of suffering. Just how *ānāpānasati* covers these three types of mental training will be discussed in detail later on — or the meditator may prefer to wait and see this by himself as a result of having actually practised it. None of the other meditation objects covers as wide a range of benefits as does mindfulness of breathing.

(2) Mindfulness of breathing is very calm and subtle as regards both object and destruction of defilements. Other meditation objects, including mindfulness of body (*kāyagatā-sati*), which is very similar to mindfulness of breathing, lack these qualities. Mindfulness of the body is calm and subtle

only in destroying defilements; it is not calm and subtle as to object. By contrast, in mindfulness of breathing the object is calm and cool, comforting, not frightening, not repulsive, not difficult to work on; what is more mindfulness of breathing can absolutely destroy the defilements. These are the qualities that make it so special. In mindfulness of the body the object is fear-inspiring, repulsive; the loathsome objects are even more so. Because mindfulness of breathing has such advantageous qualities, it was recommended by the Buddha himself as suitable for everybody. He praised it as the meditation object through which all the "Noble Ones," himself included, had achieved success and which they regularly practised.

(3) Further, mindfulness of breathing can be used throughout the entire course of training. There is no need to change from it to another meditation object. This means that by practising mindfulness of breathing alone the meditator can develop first of all concentration, secondly concentration accompanied by intuitive insight, and finally the highest intuitive insight, which eradicates the Inflows (*āsava*). Other objects of meditation, especially the *kasiṇas*,

stop short at concentration. To go on and develop insight the meditator has to change over to another object. But with mindfulness of breathing, when the meditator has developed fully all the sixteen stages described below, he has completed both concentration practice and the insight practice.

As mentioned above mindfulness of breathing alone leads to three kinds of concentration in one; no other meditation object is as convenient and comfortable or as highly praised as this one. It is for these reasons that we have here selected *ānāpānasati* as the main meditation object to be studied and practised.

Now we shall pose the question: Who should develop mindfulness of breathing? We find that in his discourses on this subject the Buddha used the words: “Bhikkhus, in this Teaching and Discipline (Dhamma-Vinaya)…” He was referring, then, to people studying in this Teaching, people who have looked at the world, seen suffering in all clarity, and wish to make an end of that suffering. “Only here in this Teaching and Discipline are there found the first Ascetic, the Second, the Third Ascetic, and the Fourth.” (Majjhima-Nikaya 11) In other words indi-

viduals at the four stages on the way to freedom from suffering, namely, the Stream-enterer, the Once-returner, the Non-returner, and the Arahant, are to be found only in this Teaching and Discipline, only with this way of practice. In other teachings and disciplines, in other systems, individuals at these four stages are not to be found. All this shows that the person who is to develop mindfulness of breathing is one who aims at making an end of suffering by way of this Teaching and Discipline. Such a person must equip himself by way of study and practice as will be further explained.

We now go on to consider what the Texts tell us about developing mindfulness of breathing. On this subject we have as our authority the words of the Buddha himself. The standard source is the "Ānāpānasati-Sutta," the "Discourse on Mindfulness of Breathing," found in the third section of the Majjhima-Nikāya (Discourse No. 118). The subject is referred to in many other places in the Tipitaka besides this. Essentially the description is everywhere the same, though in non-essential details it varies somewhat according to the situation. We shall take as our basis for practice the "Ānāpānasati-

sutta" itself, which deals specifically with the development of mindfulness of breathing including the ultimate Fruit of the practice.

This Discourse of the Buddha begins like this: "Now, Bhikkhus, a bhikkhu in this Dhamma and Discipline, having gone to the forest, to the foot of a tree, or to an empty house, sits down cross-legged with body erect, and firmly establishes mindfulness. Mindfully he breathes in, mindfully he breathes out." The Buddha then goes on to explain how to contemplate in- and out-breathing and everything that manifests in the course of breathing in and out. He explains all the sixteen stages, in four sets of four. Then in the succeeding sections he goes on to explain the benefits that arise out of this. He explains how the practice gives rise to the four Foundations of Mindfulness (*satipaṭṭhāna*) and the seven Factors of Enlightenment (*bojjhaṅga*), collectively and individually, and finally how it gives rise to Knowledge-and-Freedom (*vijjāvimutti*), which is the complete cessation of suffering.

To clarify our understanding of the subject we shall take these words of the Buddha and consider them

in order, section by section, explaining each step as required.

(1) Consider the opening phrase: "Now, Bhikkhus, a bhikkhu in this Dhamma and Discipline,..." This has already been explained in answering the question "Who should develop mindfulness of breathing?" These words refer to any seeker who intends to practise seriously according to the Buddha's Teaching.

(2) "...having gone to the forest,..." This needs a detailed explanation. The meditator should go to the forest mainly in order to get away from his accustomed environment. Here an analogy is in order. When a farmer sees a calf sufficiently grown to be suitable for training, he separates it from its mother and leads it away to a place apart. There he fastens it until it forgets its mother and its habit of being near her. He then trains it or does with it whatever else he wishes. When the calf is tied up away from its mother, it cries and struggles in every way; but in time, being unable to break loose, it gives up struggling and goes to sleep next to the post. The mind is just like the calf: it may be trained in this

way or that. Its habituation to worldly objects corresponds to the calf's clinging to the mother cow. Or, taking it another way, the environment full of attractive and tempting objects is the cow and the meditator about to embark on the practice is the calf. Going to the forest corresponds to the separation of the calf from its mother. We may think of the Buddha as a person skilled in surveying and apportioning land. He has recommended the forest as suitable for anyone intending to undertake mental development. Here is another simile given by the Buddha: "As a tiger, go and hide, waiting to catch the prey; only then will you catch something — and it will be *easy* to catch." Here the prey is the Path and Fruit, and the tiger is the monk who is ready to strive earnestly to develop his mind.

According to the Books of the Discipline (*Vinaya-Piṭaka*) the word "forest" refers to a place at least five hundred bow-lengths away from the nearest village. But the meditator may take the word "forest" as meaning any place away from the usual tempting environment. The recommended distance of five hundred bow-lengths is a good guide in any case. In the Discourse "forest" refers to a clearing

in the jungle or a habitable grove. Later teachers commented that one should go in summer to the forest or to an open, airy region, in the winter to the foot of a tree or to a thick forest, and in the rainy season to a cave or overhanging rock that protects from the rain. At some places in the Pali literature it has been further pointed out that in summer it is more comfortable to spend the day in the forest and the night in the open, while in winter it is better to spend the day in the open and the night in the forest. But the Buddha himself generally mentions only three kinds of place: "the forest, the foot of a tree, or an empty house." It seems that later teachers seeing this list of three kinds of place prescribed them for the three seasons. The meditator should note what kind of place is suitable, having in mind only that it should be a "forest" in the sense of a place of solitude, free from disturbance by worldly objects and conducive to physical detachment (*kāya-viveka*). That is what is required.

(3) "...sits down cross-legged..." Here we must, consider why the sitting posture is to be used and just what is meant by sitting cross-legged.

The sitting posture is the most suitable one for meditation—because it enables one to give one's whole attention to the practice. There is no danger of stumbling as in the posture of standing; and, it is not conducive to sleep or any other unprofitable condition—as is the posture of lying. For these reasons the sitting posture has been used since time immemorial. Other arguments in favour of sitting have been given in the section on character types. It does not follow, of course, that the meditator has to remain seated without ever changing his posture; nor is it implied that concentration cannot be developed in other postures.

The term "cross-legged" indicates a firm and balanced posture that can support the body easily and conveniently and is comfortable insofar as it permits proper circulation of blood and air. The right way to sit cross-legged is as follows: Lower the body into a sitting position and stretch both legs out in front. Bend the left knee so that the sole of the left foot comes to be under the right thigh; and then lift and bend the right leg and place the right foot on the left thigh. Place the hands one on the other. This is called the Half-Lotus Posture. If the left foot is then lifted and

placed on the right thigh, there becomes the still more stable Full Lotus Posture or *padmāsana*. In Thailand it is called *Nang-khat-samādhi-phet*, the Diamond Samādhi Posture. It is to this cross-legged posture that the Sutta refers. Whether or not the meditator has difficulty sitting in this posture will depend very much on the culture in which he was born and reared. He must in any case make an effort and train himself to it. No other posture will yield the same results. He may sit otherwise only if really necessary, as for instance through illness or physical disability. For a normal person it is highly desirable to make an effort to become accustomed to the lotus postures, even if it requires long training. The Chinese call this *āsana* the Indian posture because the Chinese normally use chairs. But for anyone who wishes to practise meditation the Indian posture is essential—as is attested by Chinese Buddhist literature dating back over a thousand years. So no-one should introduce any variation in the posture of meditation. That anyone can train himself to sit in the proper way has been proved.

(4) "...with body erect..." This means simply "sitting up straight." The word "erect" indicates that

the spine is to be kept as straight as if it were reinforced with a straight iron rod. It is desirable that all the vertebrae of the spine should fit in perfectly with one another in order that blood and air may circulate naturally — a most desirable condition under the circumstances. Unpleasant feelings arising from obstruction of the circulation of blood and air will thus be minimized. Physically these are the benefits aimed at. Mentally, the aim is to make the mind upright also, preventing it from tending to left or right, forwards or backwards, preventing it from inclining to indulgence in either sense pleasures or self-mortification, and so on. It should be noted here that one who can do this well will keep his body straight at all times no matter whether his eyes are open or shut, and even when the mind is in deep meditation and so not consciously controlling the body.

(5) "…firmly establishes mindfulness." (…*satiṃ parimukhaṃ paṭṭhapetvā*, usually translated "…establishes mindfulness in front of him.") This refers to mindfulness, which is firmly established on the object, here the breathing. It may be paraphrased as "making the mind one-pointed on the breathing,"

MEANING THAT THE MIND IS EXCLUSIVELY AWARE OF AND CONCENTRATED ON THE BREATHING. THE MIND IS SIMPLY FIXED ON ITS OBJECT; AS YET NO KNOWLEDGE (ÑĀṆA) IS PRESENT, THE MIND BEING ONLY IN THE VERY BEGINNING STAGE OF CONCENTRATION. ESSENTIALLY, THEN, THE WORDS QUOTED MEAN: "HE DIRECTS HIS WHOLE ATTENTION, HIS ENTIRE AWARENESS, TOWARDS THE BREATHING."

The meditator need not necessarily keep his eyes shut. He can practise with eyes open by fixing his gaze at the tip of the nose until he sees nothing else. Provided he has strong will-power he will have no difficulty practising in this way. Even if the eyes are open and the meditator is gazing at the tip of his nose, the mind does not become focussed there because it is aimed at the breathing, following the breathing alone. It is more difficult to practise with eyes open than with them shut. It demands a great deal of effort in the beginning, but this is compensated for by the fact that the meditator is less likely to become sleepy and in the end has stronger will-power and a better ability to establish mindfulness firmly. Anyone who is determined to practise solidly and become a perfect meditator is advised to begin practising with eyes open.

(6) "Mindfully he breathes…" Here the key word is "mindfully." The meditator has to be mindful of breathing in and out. As long as he has his mind focussed on the in- and out-breathing he is what is called a *satokāri*, "one who is exercising mindfulness." The outgoing breath is called *āna*, the incoming breath *āpāna*. These two words, combined in accordance with the phonetic rules, form the compound *ānāpāna*, meaning "breathing in and out." Mindfulness fixed on out-breath and in-breath is called *ānāpānasati*; one who is exercising this kind of mindfulness is called a *satokāri*.

Chapter IV

Ānāpānasati: Stages I To IV

Having dealt with the necessary qualifications and the posture of the person who is to develop mindfulness, the Buddha went on to speak of the successive steps in concentrating on the breathing, as follows:

(I) Breathing out long, he knows, "'I' am breathing out long"; Breathing in long, he knows, "'I' am breathing in long."

(II) Breathing out short, he knows, "'I' am breathing out short"; Breathing in short, he knows, "'I' am breathing in short."

(III) "Experiencing the whole body (of breath), 'I' shall breathe out," thus he trains himself; "Experiencing the whole body 'I' shall breathe in," thus he trains himself.

(IV) "Calming the bodily-formation, 'I' shall breathe out," thus he trains himself; "Calming the bodily-formation, 'I' shall breathe in," thus he trains himself.

These four stages are collectively called the First Tetrad of mindfulness of breathing. Various points of practice must be explained at length before the next Tetrad can be dealt with. On a certain level the practice of this, the First Tetrad, is complete in itself; from it the meditator may proceed directly to the practice of insight (*vipassanā-bhāvanā*) without passing through the second and third Tetrads. This being the case, this first Tetrad is worth considering in some detail.

Stage I

> Breathing out long, he knows,
> "'I' am breathing out long;"
>
> Breathing in long, he knows,
> "'I' am breathing in long."

This Stage deals primarily with the long in- and out-breathing. What needs to be understood is the word "breathing" itself. In order to understand long breathing the meditator should practise breathing in and out as long as he can and observing, so that he gets to know just what the longest breath is like.

Then he should compare this with the shorter than normal breath, as at a time of fatigue, so that he is able to recognize just how short or long his breaths are. Lastly he should make the experiment of intentionally breathing as short as he can in order to make a further comparison. In the end he will know what way long breathing from short breathing and what they are actually like. He will be able to concentrate in the right way on the long and short breathings as required.

In the long breathing practice, each breath, that is, each incoming breath and each outgoing, breath, may take as long as thirty to forty seconds. 'This practice will be successful only if the meditator breathes completely relaxed and sits perfectly upright. In making the longest possible in-breath he will note that the abdomen contracts to the maximum and the chest expands to the maximum; conversely, on making the longest possible out-breath the abdomen expands to the maximum and the chest contracts to the maximum. Such breathing can really be called the longest in the sense of both distance and time.

To see this properly the meditator should examine also the short breathing for the sake of comparison. Short breathing has the opposite manifestations. On the in-breath the abdomen expands; on the out-breath it contracts. It can be seen that the reason for this is that so little breath is taken in that the upper portion of the chest expands and contracts hardly at all. So the manifestations at the abdomen are just the opposite of those associated with long breathing. The meditator must know just how to observe, otherwise he will misunderstand and become completely confused. As a guiding principle, an in-breath is "short" if it causes the chest to expand only a little while not causing the abdomen to contract at all; if a breath does cause the abdomen to contract, it is to be considered "long". Conversely, to "breathe out short" is to breathe out only so much as to make the chest contract slightly and not so much as to make the abdomen expand; if the abdomen does expand the breath is to be considered "long." The criterion is the degree of contraction of the chest. The movements at the abdomen will always be the opposite of those at the chest—at least in the case of long breathing. Anyone who has studied carefully the respiratory system will follow this account quite easily.

With regard to "breathing long" the commentaries advise us to observe two kinds of animals. In animals of the first kind, such as the elephant, the duration of the breathing is longer than in animals of the second kind such as mice and rabbits. So to speak in terms of time and describe the breathing as slow or rapid amounts to the same thing as to say that the breathing is long or short. What has been said here applies only to what the meditator observes; the actual quantity of air entering and leaving is quite a different question.

Another point to be observed is whether the breath is heavy or light, coarse or fine. If the air "strikes the nostrils violently," the breathing is described as heavy or coarse; if it does not "strike the nostrils violently," so that the contact is not felt, the breathing is spoken of as light or fine. These two characteristics of breathing should be understood as well, because they are relevant to the following steps.

We come now to the various ways of concentrating on the breathing. Here the practice consists in first testing all the organs concerned with respiration, such as nostrils palate wind pipe, lungs, and so on,

making sure they are in normal and fit condition; and letting the breath move in its natural way, occasionally forcing it to be longer or shorter than normal. This preparatory step is intended to familiarize the meditator first of all with the natural rate of breathing, which is normally constant. Having done this he should begin examining just how long or short the breathing is.

Whether the breathing is short or long depends on the state of the mind and the condition of the body—in fact, no sooner does one start taking an interest in the breathing than the breathing becomes longer or shorter than usual. So in the first step the meditator must observe how the length of the breath changes according to circumstances. For example, if the state of mind is normal the breathing is long; and if the state of mind is bad, as when there is anger, the breathing is short and abrupt. Again, when the body is at ease the breathing is longer than when it is in some abnormal condition owing to fatigue or the like. In whatever condition the breathing happens to be, as soon as the meditator concentrates on it, it is naturally bound to become longer. He must be aware, then,

of changes in the breathing in this respect as well; only then will he be able to concentrate on the breathing and observe how long or short it is. When he has concentrated on the breathing for a considerable time, he will be more acutely aware of the length or shortness of it.

In the beginning, the meditator should breathe as roughly and as slowly as possible in order to observe what the breathing itself is like: how it strikes the nostril as it enters; where it appears to terminate; where and for how long it stops before reversing direction. If he breathes lightly and finely from the very beginning he will be unable to observe these things and will find it difficult to concentrate on the breath, perhaps so difficult that he fails completely in the attempt. In addition, it is advisable for the meditator to breathe so roughly and heavily that a sound is produced which is audible to himself. The ears are helpful in concentrating on breathing.

Actually to “establish mindfulness on the breathing” is to concentrate not on the air itself but on the surface of the skin where the air strikes. Air, being so fine and intangible, is very difficult to observe; but

when it happens to strike the surface of the skin at a sensitive spot, it is easy to detect its presence and to observe the duration of the contact. And when there is an audible sound as well it is all the more easy to observe how long or short the breaths are. This is the advantage of breathing heavily in the beginning. Even in the later stages of the practice the meditator will find it advantageous to breathe deeply and heavily until he has become used to it and it has become-a habit. This will always be beneficial to the training in succeeding stages, quite apart from being very good for bodily health. It is advisable, then, to train oneself to breathe deeply and heavily in a natural way at every opportunity.

Now we come to the point where the breathing has become naturally long as a result of attention having been directed towards it. This concentrating is simply "the act of fixing attention on the breathing which is moving in and out in its own way." We may also say that it is "observation of the breathing in a certain state and at a certain time." But we prefer the clear and vivid definition found in the meditation manuals and the Abhidhamma: "Tying the mind to the breathing with the tether of mindful-

ness.” So now we have to study at least three things: breathing, mind, and mindfulness. In addition we have to study the various results of this “tying the mind to the breathing.”

The first of these three things, the breathing, has already been discussed. Now for the second one, the mind. The mind has previously been absorbed in all manner of worldly objects; now it is being deprived of them and made fast to the breathing with the tether of mindfulness; it will no longer be allowed to mingle with those worldly objects as it has done so far. Mindfulness is a wholesome mental factor or *cetasika*. It serves to lift or draw the mind and tie it to the breathing, which is purely physical but not a basis for unwholesome states; so through the power of this factor of mindfulness the mind can become free from the unwholesome and attain to the wholesome. In this step there is still only concentration, knowledge or *ñāṇa* not having arisen as yet. Hence speak of it as “preliminary work” (*parikamma*). This “preliminary work” is a kind of mental activity which we shall classify later as a Factor of Absorption (*jhānaṅga*), called Directing of the Mind (*vitakka*). (It should be realized that the *word vitakka* here has

this meaning and not the commonly known meaning of thinking and speculating.)

Concentrating in the manner described prepares the way for the automatic arising of knowledge and awareness of the length or shortness of the breathing and the like. When the breath is moving in and out and the mind is tied to it with mindfulness, the mind, as it were, moves in and out, following the breath. Knowledge then arises quite automatically. This knowledge is not Insight (*ñāṇa*); it is just Clear Awareness (*sampajañña*), full awareness of the present condition of the breathing. (In some texts, however, the word *ñāṇa* is used for this kind of knowledge as well, a fact that has to be realized in order to avoid confusion. The word *ñāṇa* has a wide range of meanings; it can mean knowledge of any kind at all, but strictly speaking applies to *intuitive* knowledge. The word "*ñāṇa* is over-popular, often being used where a weaker word would do. Some teachers classify even the awareness that "I am breathing in long" as a kind of *ñāṇa*—all of which leads to unnecessary confusion.) So knowledge arises right at the very beginning of the practice of *ānāpānasati*. No sooner does the meditator concen-

trate on breathing out long than he is aware "'I' am breathing out long."

The sequence of events during this concentrating on breathing is as follows:

1. After long practice in concentrating on the breathing the meditator finally manages to concentrate successfully. As a result there arises in him for the first time the wholesome mental factor of…

2. Zeal (*chanda*). When zeal is present the breathing appears longer than before. It also becomes finer, if not in the early stage of the arising of zeal, then in the later. And when the meditator, aided by the power of this zeal, establishes mindfulness for some time on this longer and finer breathing, he experiences…

3. Gladness. The Word "gladness" (*pāmujja*) implies a lighter form of Rapture (*pīti*), a wholesome mental factor later to be ranked as one of the five important constituents of the First Absorption. By the power of this gladness the breathing becomes still longer and finer and the mindfulness of the

meditator is so firmly established that it just does not leave the object. The mind at this stage is therefore said to be…

4. Air-originated. The term "air-originated mind" is used because the mind in this stage is conditioned exclusively by the breathing and concentration on the breathing. It merely indicates that the mind has just become one-pointed, that is, fixed on one single object and has attained this one-pointed condition by way of the breathing. After this there arises …

5. Equanimity (*upekkhā*) towards worldly objects. The various Hindrances (*nīvaraṇa*) no longer disturb the mind; equanimity is clearly manifest. Meanwhile…

6. The breathing is replaced by a mental image (*nimitta*) called the Acquired Image (*uggaha-nimitta*). This image is very clear to the inner eye in one form or another. The particular form it takes differs for different people. When this mental image has become well developed it can be said that…

7. Mindfulness has become automatic. It is manifest as a mental factor as well as fulfilling its function of concentration. Because mindfulness is operating uninterruptedly there arises what is called *sampajañña* or Full Awareness. Here, however, we give it a new name and say that…

8. Knowledge becomes manifest. Just what this means depends on the particular step of the practice in which the knowledge arises. In this, the first Stage of the practice, the knowledge that arises is merely Full Awareness, which simply makes one aware of the fact that "'I' am breathing out long," or "'I' am breathing in long."

9. The "body" (*kāya*) becomes manifest also. The breathing is referred to as "the body "(*kāya*), being part of the physical body (*rūpa-kāya*), a constituent of matter—though strictly speaking a mental body (*nāma-kāya*) is manifest also. Consciousness and its factors, zeal, gladness, and so on—which are referred to as the mental body (*nāma-kāya*)—are all present. But since the practice in this step is only in its beginning stage, and since the meditator is only aiming at concentrating on the breathing,

that is, on the physical body or *rūpa-kāya*, the word "body" (*kāya*) refers only to the physical body and in particular to the breathing. When the body, that is to say, the breathing is perceived, mindfulness is established and knowledge arises. Thus all three are present, and the meditator, or more precisely the mind of the meditator, has attained to...

10. Complete success in establishing mindfulness of the body. This is achieved even here in Stage I based only on concentration on the long breathing.

In the first three of these ten steps the length of the breathing passes through three phases:

(1) The breathing is naturally long and slow.
(2) It becomes longer owing to the zeal that has arisen.
(3) It becomes still longer on account of the gladness that arises after zeal.

Another three modes of breathing may be recognized according as

(1) the out-breath is long, or
(2) the in-breath is long, or
(3) Both the out-and the in-breath are long.

These three, when combined with the three phases in the length of breathing listed above make a total of nine, known as the nine Modes of Length. These nine Modes of Length form a sound guideline for the training in concentration on long breathing in Stage I.

Stage II

> Breathing out short, he knows
> "'I' am breathing out short."
>
> Breathing in short, he knows
> "'I' am breathing in short."

This Stage differs from the first only in that it deals with short breathing rather than long. Breathing short here refers only to breathing that occurs intermittently, namely while the meditator is training himself by on purpose taking short breaths. As soon as he knows just what the short breath is like, he stops breathing short. The terms "short" and "long" may be applied to normal breathing depending on one's choice of criteria. If a person realizes that his breathing is naturally shorter than that of the aver-

age man, he should recognize that as normal for himself. As his practice progresses, zeal and gladness will arise and gradually increase the length of his breaths. The various stages dealt with under "long breathing" will be attained one by one until all ten are completed.

Should short breathing occur during the practice because of fatigue, excitement, illness, fear, pain, or because of confusion in the initial stages, that short breathing should be observed and acknowledged as short. If it is not made much of, it will pass and not occur again. Once such short breathing has passed, there is no need to think about it again.

If the meditator trains himself to breathe short as an experiment, the observing of the short breathing lasts only as long as the experiment. The real objective of training in short breathing to give the mind experience in dealing with the more difficult conditions, so that it will be equipped to attain concentration with every kind of breathing.

To sum up, breathing short in Stage ii has been taught as a preparation for the short breathing that

will occasionally occur of itself. It is also used as a means of observing and comparing the characteristics of long and short breathing. When the meditator has understood well both kinds of breathing, he will be equipped to attain full concentration without hesitation regardless of whether the breathing is short or long. Normal breathing changes in response to various natural factors such as zeal. Exceptionally short or long breathing may intervene at times but never for long. This must be adjusted as the situation demands. For instance, the arising of uneasiness can be detected by noting that the breathing has become shorter. The breathing can then be adjusted, made long again, by developing gladness. Full awareness on the part of the meditator enables him to concentrate on both short and long breathing. No matter how complicated the manner in which they arise, he will always be able to gain concentration.

Stages i and ii can be illustrated by the analogy of a swinging cradle. A hanging cradle is kept swinging by the nurse looking after the child. The baby, when it has just been put into the cradle, does not want to sleep. It tries to climb out of the cradle, and is likely

to fall at any moment. The nurse has to be very careful and keep her eyes fixed on the child. No matter in which direction the cradle swings, and regardless of whether it swings short or long, fast or slow, because of the movements of the baby or because of her own irregular pushing, she must constantly follow with her eyes each swing. She is fully aware when the cradle swings short and when it swings long. STAGES I and II of *ānāpānasati* are similar. Through the power of mindfulness or the mind's concentration on the breathing, the state of the breathing — long or short, fast or slow — is known at all times. Because mindfulness never leaves the breathing but remains fixed on it in this way until it becomes regular and smooth, the meditator moves on to STAGE III.

STAGE III

> "Experiencing the whole body
> (of breath), 'I' shall breathe out," thus
> he trains himself;
>
> "Experiencing the whole body, 'I' shall
> breathe in," thus he trains himself.

Some points here require careful attention. Consider the words “he trains himself.” *Ānāpāna-sati* has now reached the stage where insight (*ñāṇa*) is attained. The words “he trains himself” refer to the practice of the Threefold Training, namely the Training in Morality, Concentration, and Insight (*sīla-*, *samādhi-*, *paññā-sikkhā*). The meditator practising this Threefold Training fully is advised to reflect that when on the breathing one has restraint, and that when practising restraint one is morally pure. This is perfect morality. While practising in this way the meditator cannot transgress the moral precepts and so is practising the Training in Morality. When his mindfulness remains fixed on the object, in this case the breathing, he has full concentration (*samādhi*). His mind has only one object, and is established in that object. A person in such a condition is said to be practising the Training Concentration. Next when the meditator sees the various objects present together with their characteristics, and realizes that his mindfulness is clearly manifested in relation to those objects, he is said to have knowledge or insight. The meditator is then practising the Training in Insight. In this way the meditator is practising

the entire Threefold Training. The interesting point is that by merely practising this "experiencing of the whole body" all three aspects of the Training are cultivated. Even just this much practice guarantees perfect Morality, Concentration, and Insight. This is the remarkable thing about Morality-Concentration-Insight. It answers the question how a person who has not studied the scriptures thoroughly can practise the Threefold Training perfectly.

Another point to observe is that the Buddha begins using the words "he trains himself" here at Stage iii and then uses them with every stage up to the sixteenth and last. From Stage iii onwards we are concerned with the real practice, the training proper. What is more this practice is complete as regards the Threefold Training. Stages i and ii are just preliminaries, the bare beginnings of the training in how to concentrate on an object. They consist merely in restraint, there being as yet no true Morality, Concentration, and Insight. The Threefold Training is completed for the first time in Stage iii, and it can therefore be said that it is here that true knowledge or insight first arises.

The word "experiencing" as used in the lines quoted implies complete knowledge, something higher than the mere *sampajañña* (Full Awareness) of Stages i and ii. "Experiencing" means knowing everything completely, clearly, and in detail. The compound *paṭi-saṃ-vedī* implies knowing clearly and completely the various phenomena in their natural sequence. It further implies knowing the "body," that is, the breathing itself, as to its characteristics, its state of being, its causes and results, and so on. Since the word "body" refers here to the breathing, it follows that knowing fully means knowing the breathing as short or long, knowing the movement of the breathing, knowing the source of the breathing, namely the life-force, and knowing the result of breathing, namely the function of respiration, the necessary condition for the body and the whole physical aspect of life. To sum up, "experiencing the whole body" simply means knowing immediately everything related to the breathing. This knowledge culminates in knowledge of the impermanence, unsatisfactoriness, and non-selfhood of all these states and functions — a point that will be dealt with in the higher stages of the practice.

Now consider the phrase "the whole body." To understand this we must first consider the word "body" (*kāya*). *Kāya* means literally "group." As mentioned before, there are two kinds of *kāya* or "body," the mental and the physical (*nāma-kāya* and *rūpa-kāya*). The mental body or group includes the feelings (*vedanā*), perceptions (*saññā*), mental conditionings (*saṅkhāra*), and consciousness (*viññāṇa*). Thus it covers a wide range; but in the present case the reference is to the various mental states that arise during concentration on breathing, such as zeal, gladness, mindfulness, full awareness and the like. All of these belong to the *nāma-kāya*, the mental body. The *rūpa-kāya* is the physical body made up of the four Primary Elements (*mahābhūta*), Earth, Water, Fire, Air. But here it refers in particular to the breathing, which is closely related to the Primary Elements, being what maintains them and gives them value and purpose, as well as being the basis for the continued existence of the mental body. In short, the "body," that is, the breathing, performs the function of *kāya-saṅkhāra*, body-conditioner. It conditions the physical body, maintaining it as the basis for the continued existence of the mental body. A thoughtful person who has perceived the nature of

the whole body, physical and mental, and seen how its two aspects are interrelated, can discover for himself the significance of the breathing and see it as worthy of special consideration. Hence it suffices to say that the monk "contemplates the body in the body": out of the entire body, physical and mental, the meditator selects and watches one particular body, the breathing. Hence it is that *ānāpānasati* is called Foundation of Mindfulness Consisting in Contemplation of the Body (*kāyānupassanā-satipaṭṭhāna*). The essence of this is natural and uninterrupted "contemplation of the body in the body," which means knowing each in- and out-breath.

Now consider the word "whole." Though this word is used in connection with every kind of body, here it means simply that body which is the whole breathing or everything related to that body. Since the word "body" refers here to the breathing, the things to be known are all the things directly connected with that breathing. This means knowing the characteristics of the breathing and knowing what arises as a consequence of the breathing. Again, *ānāpānasati* in this third Stage is still primarily concerned with concentration; so the words "the whole body"

have meaning mainly insofar as they are concerned with concentration developed through the breathing. We can specifically say, then, that “the whole body” means the entire breathing process. To experience the “whole body” is to experience the breathing thoroughly, in all respects.

As to how to “experience the whole body,” an easy way has been suggested. It consists in first analysing the breathing into three phases: beginning, middle, and end. The meditator must feel where the breath originates, how it moves, where it ends, on both in- and out-breath. In the case of breathing in, the breath can be said to originate at the nostrils or some point in that region where the meditator feels the incoming air strike. Normally the incoming air is felt to strike at the tip of the nose, though a person: with prominent lips will feel it on the upper lip, which is then to be taken as the point of origin. The “middle” of the breath is the interval between the point of origin and the end of the breath. So we must consider next the point where the breathing ends. We need not be too seriously concerned as to just where the in-breath ends and turns about. It suffices to take as the end-point a feeling that

appears more clearly than others and is more convenient to concentrate on than others. When breathing in to the maximum, the meditator should feel the end of the throbbing movement and pressure of the breathing. It is generally held that the in-breath ends at the navel.

It should be borne in mind that we are here concerned with the practice of meditation and not with anatomy or physiology. The exact point at which the breath ends is unimportant; what is important is to establish mindfulness on the breathing and to experience it. So the navel may as well be taken as the end-point of the in-breath. It suffices for our purposes. We may say, then, that the in-breath has as its point of origin the tip of the nose, as its end-point the navel, and as its middle the whole interval between these two. For the out-breath it is just the other way about — the point of origin is the navel and the end-point the tip of the nose.

Experiencing the whole body (breathing) is possible when the meditator is aware of the beginning, middle, and end of the entire in- and out-breathing, not letting any part of the process pass unobserved.

In practice, however, the mind is very fickle, very easily distracted. Even during a short period of breathing in and out, if mindfulness is not thoroughly established, the mind is bound to leave the breathing object and wander on to other things. For instance, the mind may be well fixed on the breathing at the beginning of the in-breath, only to go astray in the middle of the breath and dwell on something quite different for a shorter or longer period.

For this reason the meditator is cautioned to concentrate particularly carefully during the middle phase of the breathing. He is advised to apply different methods to keep the mind properly directed. One rough method advised for beginners is to count slowly, from one to five or from one to ten, for the duration of each in- or out-breath. If the meditator applies himself constantly to counting throughout each in- and out-breath, his mind will have no chance to wander. This technique also helps the meditator to control the length of the breathing. He can make his breathing longer or shorter by lengthening or shortening the count. A detailed explanation of the method of counting will be given in STAGE IV, to follow.

Here is another method, which is quite subtle and delicate. It is recommended that the meditator should imagine his mind as actually tied to the breathing. He shoulder visualize the air as dragging the mind in and out all the time as he breathes. In order to do this he must breathe strongly enough to be able to feel the movement of the air. He should feel as if his breathing passages were highly sensitive. He should distinctly feel the air as something solid which scrapes as it moves in and out. By this means the meditator will be able to feel the entire breathing cycle and concentrate on it. He will then easily discern where it begins, how it moves, where it ends, and where and for how long it rests before reversing direction. He visualizes the breath as a kind of gem which is being swept along a track, and determines not to let it out of his sight for an instant.

In terms of the cradle analogy, the person swinging the cradle must take great care not to let the child fall out. As long as the child is still awake and trying to climb out, the nurse watches it constantly. No matter whether the cradle is at the end

of its swing to either side, or at some point in between, there exists always the danger that the child may climb out of the cradle. For this reason the nurse keeps her eyes constantly fixed on the child. As long as she is doing this she can be said to see the child fully. Anything that happens to the child will be fully known to her. Similarly, the meditator establishes or fixes his mindfulness on the breathing and sees mentally the entire process without interruption. In this way he is able to experience uninterruptedly the whole body of breath: beginning, middle, and end. When this method is applied the breath body is seen clearly, mindfulness is seen clearly, and knowledge (*ñāṇa*) is seen clearly as well. Mindfulness is seen as mindfulness, knowledge as knowledge, and the breath body as the breath body. They are not seen as objects of attachment, as "being," "person," "ego," "self," "soul," "me," "mine." When this stage has been reached the meditator can be said to know the breath body to its entirety. He is not subject to any defiling state of mind such as covetousness and grief, and has constant equanimity, which is the basis for true *samādhi*, to be developed in the next Stage.

Stage IV

> "Calming the bodily-formation. 'I' shall breathe out," thus he trains himself;
>
> "Calming the bodily-formation, 'I' shall breathe in," thus he trains himself.

In this description of the fourth stage, the terms to be examined and understood are "bodily formation" and "calming." They are explained as follows:

The term "bodily formation" means here the breathing as sustainer or preserver of the Primary Elements, which are the basis of feeling, and so on. This has been mentioned already and need not be discussed again. However, it should be understood that breathing is very closely co-ordinated with the rest of the body, being the source of a variety of bodily phenomena such as temperature, movement, flexibility, and so on. Breathing and body are interrelated, influencing each other mutually as to grossness or fineness, restlessness or calmness, and so on. As may be seen, when the body is stiff or restless the breathing tends to be likewise gross or restless,

conversely when the breathing is fine and calm the body tends to become flexible and calm as well. So to control the body is to control the breathing; and conversely, to control the breathing is to control the body. When the breathing is fine, the body is tender and flexible. It is in no way stiff, painful, or restless. This observation, besides revealing the close relationship existing between body and breathing, indicates the value of taking into consideration both body and breathing, training them simultaneously so that they may calm each other mutually.

One point needs to be stressed, in this connection. The normal breathing (before beginning to practise) is conventionally termed gross or fine, calm or restless; irrespective of the state of the body. But, regardless of how fine and calm the normal or natural breathing may be, it must, in terms of the practice, be regarded as still gross. It will become truly subtle and calm through the meditation practice, and it is precisely that process that constitutes STAGE IV.

The word "calming" is to be understood in terms of effect. As mentioned above, the normal or natural breathing is to be reckoned as gross, even though it

may not appear so. As soon as it is watched with concentration, it will be seen to be distinctly gross and rough, but then will begin to grow finer. The more the breathing is scrutinized, the more subtle and calm it will become. In this it resembles the sound of a gong. A gong when struck produces a loud sound. When that sound subsides only long reverberations or vibrations remain. At first the reverberations are almost as loud as the sound directly produced by the stroke; but then they gradually subside and become fainter and fainter until finally they disappear altogether. Just like the reverberations produced by the gong is the breathing, which also has the characteristic of becoming calmer and calmer, (when given the "stroke" of concentration and scrutiny). Unless the gong is struck, no sound arises; likewise, unless the breathing is scrutinized, examined, "silence" seems to prevail, no breathing is detected at all, although it is undoubtedly going on automatically. When the meditator does begin examining the breathing, he immediately perceives it and recognizes it as gross, just as on striking a gong one at once hears a loud or gross sound. Once the meditator has begun to scrutinize the breathing, it becomes progressively more and more subtle in

proportion to the intensity of his scrutiny. The more minutely and closely he observes and examines the breath, the more calm it becomes. All this is said to point out two important facts: First, if there is no act of scrutinizing or concentrating, the breathing is gross in its natural way—though this grossness is not noticed. Second, when the breathing is scrutinized it gradually becomes more subtle. But it is not sufficient for it simply to calm down of its own accord in this way. The meditator must deliberately calm it down as far as possible by practising this fourth stage. And this is what is meant by the term "calming" in the phrase "calming the bodily formation."

Now, how is the bodily formation to be calmed? This can be done in either of two ways: through concentration or through insight. Here concentration is the process of establishing mindfulness on the breathing as explained in Stage III. The more the meditator concentrates, the more subtle his breathing becomes. It may even become so fine as to be indiscernible and have to be brought back into focus. Or it may become so fine in the correct way that there arises the Counterpart Sign or *paṭibhāga-nimitta.* Both of these phenomena result from calming the

breath by way of concentration. Concentration of this sort is Tranquillity Meditation, pure and simple. It contrasts with Insight Meditation, the practice that leads to Insight, the direct path to Intuitive Insight (*vipassanā*), which by-passes the highest stages of Tranquillity Meditation. Put another way, it is a method for the meditator who wishes to practise simultaneously Tranquillity Meditation and Insight Meditation. To develop insight the meditator may take as object the breathing or any other phenomenon that goes on throughout the course of the breathing cycle. The finer the phenomenon the more finely he will discern it and consequently the finer his breathing will become. So a person practising this stage in *ānāpānasati* can be said to be "calming the bodily formation."

We shall now describe how, through the developing of insight, the breathing becomes progressively finer in proportion to the fineness of the object taken for scrutiny.

In the beginning, when there is no scrutiny, the breathing is naturally gross. When the nature of the breathing is scrutinized, it immediately tends to be-

come calm. (In the texts the word used is “fine”; but since fineness of breath presupposes calmness, the word “calm” is equally appropriate.) When the Primary Elements (Earth, Water, Fire, Air) which are connected with the breathing are scrutinized, the breathing becomes still calmer. With the scrutinizing of Derived Matter (*Upādāya-rūpa*), that is, the various characteristics and properties derived from and more subtle than, the Primary Elements, the breathing becomes even calmer. When both Primary Elements and Derived Matter are scrutinized in terms of the dependence of the latter on the former, the breathing becomes still calmer. When the non-physical (*arūpa*), such as space, consciousness, and so on is scrutinized, the breathing becomes still calmer. When both the physical and the non-physical (*rūpa-arūpa*) are scrutinized in terms of their differences, interrelationships, and so on, the breathing becomes more subtle still. When the conditions (*paccaya*) determining the physical and the non-physical — otherwise Mind-and-Matter (*nāma-rūpa*) — are scrutinized with such fineness as to penetrate clearly into the mode and conditions of their arising, the breathing, becomes even more subtle. And when the impermanence, unsatisfactoriness,

and non-selfhood of Mind-and-Matter are discerned, the breathing becomes even more subtle and calm.

This developing of insight following on concentration, this close scrutiny aimed at intuitive insight, renders the breathing progressively more and more calm. The way of insight is distinctly different from that of straight-out concentration (such as the undiscerning mindfulness on breathing of the earlier stages), which leads only to tranquillity (*samatha*).

In passing, an important point in connection with the whole practice must be noted. If the meditator has reached this fourth stage and wishes to carry on through all the sixteen, he should continue practising concentration until he attains the highest stage of tranquillity meditation, namely the Fourth Absorption (*catuttha-jhāna*). After that he should pass on to practise successively Stages v to xii. Then, to attain the climax of his practice, he should carry on to practise the last Tetrad (Stages) xiii to xvi), which deals with the penetration of impermanence, unsatisfactoriness, and non-selfhood. On the other hand, if the meditator does not wish to reach the higher stages of tranquillity meditation (First to

Fourth Absorptions), preferring to develop insight immediately and directly, he may do so. What he must do in that case is to change the concentration on breathing into scrutinizing of Mind-and-Matter in terms of impermanence and so on as mentioned above. Then, by the power of intuitive scrutiny alone, he may proceed directly to the last Tetrad— all of which will be discussed in its proper place. So anyone who wishes to develop insight directly does not need the absorptions. He needs just a limited degree of concentration to serve as a basis for the insight, because he is aiming at the cessation of suffering and does not care for any special ability or quality such as Higher Supernormal Powers (*abhiññā*) or the like. This technique of scrutinizing in order to develop insight will be explained in detail later (STAGES XIII, XIV).

Now we shall clarify the process of calming the bodily formation for straight-out tranquillity meditation. Even while practising the calming of the bodily formation, there is a calming or straightening of wrong beliefs or views regarding "the being," "me," "mine." It is, however, no more than a simple knowledge of impersonality, of the non-existence of ego, self, soul;

since the meditator merely perceives the body as body, the breathing as breathing, the mind aware of the breathing as mind, and awareness of the whole process as awareness. (The meditator "perceiving the body as body" has no sense of "me" or "mine" with regard to the various phenomena that arise, nor does he identify himself with them.) He views things rightly as mere natural phenomena, not misconceiving any of them as a "being," "self," "person," or "soul," which might be the basis for liking or disliking. He can, therefore, get rid to some degree of covetousness and disappointment. The main point here is, that even though the practice is exclusively tranquillity meditation, it can to some extent do away with attachment to wrong views such as the idea of "being," "self," and the like, since the development of concentration is complementary to insight meditation, which destroys such wrong views completely. This only happens, however, if there is already some Right Understanding (*sammā-diṭṭhi*). We shall, therefore, deal further with the practice for calming the bodily formation by tranquillity meditation. But first we shall discuss in detail how the meditator can attain concentration up to the stage of the absorptions.

CHAPTER V

EIGHT STEPS TO ABSORPTION

At this point we must pause to summarize the entire practice. The course of practice from beginning to end, up to the attainment of the Noble Paths and Fruits (*ariya-magga-phala*), may be divided into eight major steps, as follows:

(1) *Counting* (*gaṇanā*): Counting is used to determine the length of the breath and also to control the breathing by way of experiencing its beginning, middle, and end. It is practised while the breathing is still gross and applies to STAGES I, II, and III.

(2) *Connecting* (*anubandhanā*): "Connecting" is the practice of following the breathing closely, and without interruption, tying the mind to it with mindfulness. It is done without counting and without following or marking the beginning, middle, and end of the breaths. Connecting applies in STAGE III in particular.

(3) *Contact* (*phusanā*): Here mindfulness is directed to the single point where the breath contacts the skin surface, in order to bring about the arising there of the Acquired Image or Sign (*uggaha-nimitta*). It applies to STAGE IV.

(4) *Fixing* (*ṭhapanā*): In this step the mind is firmly fixed on the point where the Acquired Sign has arisen in order that this Acquired Sign may in due course be converted into a distinct and well-established Counterpart Sign (*paṭibhāga-nimitta*), which in its turn leads to the attainment of full concentration or absorption. Fixing is relevant in STAGE IV.

(5) *Observing* (*sallakkhaṇā*): The meditator observes Mind-and-Matter, developing insight in order to perceive them as impermanent, unsatisfactory, and devoid of selfhood. It applies from STAGE V to the end.

(6) *Turning away* (*vivaṭṭanā*): This is the technique for turning away from or getting rid of the defilements or impurities and acquiring in their place good qualities, starting with dispassion or

detachment (*virāga*) and continuing right up to the attainment of the Noble Paths. It applies in Stages XIII to XVI.

(7) *Purifying* (*parisuddhi*): This is the gaining of the Noble Fruit destroying the impurities, which is commonly known as Deliverance (*vimutti*) or Deliverance by Destruction (*samuccheda-vimutti*). It is the result of developing *ānāpānasati* according to the last stage.

(8) *Looking back* (*paṭipassanā*): This consists in looking back on or reviewing the destruction of the defilements or Fetters, and the Fruit gained thereby. The meditator contemplates the Noble Fruit while mindfully breathing.

Of these eight steps the last four deal with intuitive insight and the Noble Paths and Fruits. The third and fourth, contact and fixing, are immediately concerned with calming the bodily formation. Counting is simply the establishing of mindfulness on the long and short breaths in Stages I and II. Connecting means carrying on mindfulness uninterruptedly with each in and out-breath. Since success in

STAGES III and IV depends on an understanding and proper practice of STAGES I and II, it is necessary that STAGES I to IV be considered and explained afresh in such a way as to show how they are related to the first four of these eight steps or techniques.

The first technique, counting, serves two purposes. It is used firstly to discover the length of the breaths, and secondly to prevent the mind from wandering from the breathing. To be of use counting must coexist with the control of the mind and be in harmony with it. The meditator should count at least up to five but not beyond ten. If he prefers just to estimate the length of the breaths rather than actually counting, he may do so in the way explained, in STAGES I and II. In any case he must do it with the proper state of mind; *avoiding the extremes of sluggishness and excessive effort.*

Counting is an effective means of facilitating concentration, though rather coarse compared with the technique of estimating. Each time the meditator takes an in-or out-breath he counts "One, two, three, four, five," the last number coinciding with the end of the breath. Even if he counts right up to

ten by saying (mentally) "One, two, three,... eight, nine, ten," he must exercise judgement so that the counting ends at the end of each in-and out-breath. And whichever number he chooses to count to, he must so arrange things that the end of the counting coincides with the end of the breath. It is best to count up to either five or ten rather than to intermediate numbers. Obviously the technique of counting is used only when the breathing is naturally or normally long and is experienced in terms of beginning, middle, and end. The reason for not counting less than five or more than ten is this: If the meditator stops short of five, the intervals in counting (between each number and the next) are long enough to give the mind a chance to wander from the object (the breathing). Counting less than five is too coarse, too slack, and is not appreciably different from merely concentrating on the breath in terms of beginning, middle, and end. If on the other hand the meditator goes beyond ten, he has to count too quickly and will become flurried. Being lost in counting, his mind will once again deviate from the object, It is undesirable to be too sluggish or too hurried, to count in intervals excessively long or short. These faults affect the mind adversely and

confuse it. This is the technique of counting. The meditator should experiment with it in its various forms. This trains the mind and keeps it in trim. It also helps it to get to know itself better.

The technique of estimating the length of the breaths without counting has already been explained amply in Stages i and ii dealing with concentration on long and short breathing. It has to be realized that this practice of estimating the lengths of the breaths must always be done with mindfulness and equanimity. The meditator must be neither impatient and over-eager nor sluggish and lax. In the first case the mind is scattered and so cannot concentrate on the object; in the second the mind has the chance to wander off the object. The breath is just like a small bird, which, if caught and held in the hand only loosely, will slip through the fingers, and if held too tightly, will die. In either case there is no hope of having the bird alive. The same holds true of the meditator who fails to avoid these two extremes.

Both the technique of counting and that of estimating the length of the breaths without counting are

covered by the single term *gaṇanā*. Both techniques are to be practised while contemplating the breathing, long or short. Both are to be practised from the first applying of mindfulness up to the stage of following the course of air. Once the breathing has become to some extent smoothed and calmed down, such a coarse technique as counting is no longer appropriate. Another more subtle technique is then required, namely concentration on the breathing at just one particular point. This technique is dealt with in detail under “Contact” (*phusanā*). Here we discuss it only in brief and only insofar as it overlaps with counting.

When the meditator finds it no longer necessary to follow the breathing all the time, because the mind has become quite tranquil, he should concentrate on just the single point where the air touches his nostril or lip as it passes in and out. He should count or estimate while attending to that point. To understand this clearly, we must return to the analogy of the cradle. Let us picture the nurse sitting near the post at the foot of the cradle. The child in the cradle is not yet asleep, nor is it inclined to sleep. It seems to be trying to climb out of the

cradle. And it is for this reason that the nurse is constantly watching it, turning her face to right and left. Her eyes are fixed on the baby, giving it no chance to climb out of the cradle. The child now becomes drowsy and looks as if about to go to sleep. The nurse need not now watch as before. She just watches the cradle as it passes in front of her. That is enough. She need no longer watch it by turning her head to right and left; to do so would be a waste of energy. Likewise, when the breathing first becomes tranquil, when the "body becomes calm," the practice enters a new phase more delicate and subtle than before, in which the meditator fixes his attention at one particular point, not following the breath in and out. This change in technique is very advantageous and suitable.

We have mentioned earlier that the track or path of the breathing can be divided into three regions, namely the nose-tip, the middle of the chest, and the navel area. We must now consider the results of directing attention to each of these locations. Suppose we direct attention to the middle of the chest. This region is too large for it to be possible to fix on a limited point there. If attention is directed to

the navel region, the mind will likewise wander. This is because, as in the case of the chest, the body sense can only delimit a large circular region, and is not able to fix on a small area. The only place left is the nose tip, the small area where the breath passes in and out. Here the breathing can be clearly felt and easily concentrated on. It is for this reason that the nose tip has been accepted as the best place on which to establish mindfulness in this part of the practice.

The analogy of the gate-keeper helps to clarify this technique. A gate-keeper remains at the gate and does not leave it. He need not examine people who have not yet arrived at the gate, nor need he examine those who have already passed through and are now inside the town. He examines only the people actually passing through the gate. That is all he needs do. In this way he achieves the desired result without tiring himself or wasting his time. Similarly, the meditator at this stage in his practice must be mindful of the breathing at the nostril, or more precisely, at the inner side of the nose tip. He should imagine that the flesh at that point is very tender, like a sensitive wound, so that even a very small

movement of air can be clearly felt there. His mindfulness must be fixed at this single point, which, to anticipate, is known as the Point of Contact (*phusanā*, to be dealt with in detail below). For the average person this point can be located easily, and for anyone with a bent or hooked nose it is all the more easy to locate it. But a person with a turned up or flattened nose may find it rather difficult to feel the air at the nose tip because it strikes directly and is felt at the upper lip rather than at the nose tip. In such a case, the meditator should fix the point at the upper lip instead of the nose tip. It is something for each one to work out for himself.

So mindfulness based on counting while following the whole course of the breathing becomes mindfulness based on counting while fixing the mind at either of the two points just discussed. The technique of counting is changed as well. The meditator is advised to count by fives, saying "Five, ten, fifteen, twenty, twenty-five," as each breath passes the contact point. Or he may count by tens: "Ten, twenty thirty, forty, fifty." As for estimating without counting, this should be done by fixing the mind right at the contact point in order to be aware of whether the

breath is passing in or out and whether the breaths are long or short, heavy or light, coarse or fine, and so on.

Now in the technique of Connecting (*anubandhanā*) the meditator follows the breath continuously like a shadow. This practice closely resembles STAGE III, "experiencing the whole body. "Here too, mindfulness is established on normal breathing, but the practice is more refined. Accessory techniques are kept to a minimum. As long as mindfulness is established by means of counting or by observing beginning, middle, and end, the technique is still gross. The meditator observing the beginning, middle, and end of the breath unit perceives the breath as "rising-falling-rising-falling." The Applied Thought or Initial Application (*vitakka*) that he uses to fix mindfulness is still coarse, agitated. It is directed not towards the breath unit as a whole, but towards its various phases: now towards the beginning, now towards the middle, now towards the end. Thus the mind is applied in a gross way. So the meditator now abandons this method and scrutinizes the breathing uninterruptedly. This uninterrupted scrutiny, whether carried out by following

the whole breath unit or by fixing on the point of contact is more refined and subtle. The cruder counting technique is now given up completely.

From Stage III, "experiencing the whole breath body," the practice has now progressed to the point where there is no more observing of beginning, middle, and end. Even when mindfulness is fixed only at the point of contact, not following the course of the breath, the meditator can be said to be experiencing the whole bodily formation or the whole breathing process. He is then like the gate-keeper examining only as they enter or leave by the gate and disregarding their other movements. Limiting mindfulness to the single point of contact comes to the same thing as following the breathing in and out uninterruptedly. And it is in this sense that connection, the second step, is to be understood. The practitioner who wishes to progress easily must understand connection perfectly and practise it. The subtler the breathing and the technique of watching, the more refined the mind automatically becomes; hence the techniques that the meditator uses for contemplating his breathing should be progressively more subtle and refined.

The third step is Contact (*phusanā*). This step is to be studied together with Fixing, the fourth step. Fixing means focussing the mind firmly and unswervingly at the point of contact. Obviously then, Fixing and Contact are closely related; in addition they overlap with the second step of Connecting.

The word *phusanā* may be taken as referring either to the point of contact or to the act of contacting or touching. In practice the distinction is irrelevant since without the act of contacting there can be no point of contact. In other words, if there is no concentration on the breathing there is neither act of contacting nor point of contact. Concentration implies Contact. In STAGES I, II, and III the whole breath from beginning to end is observed. Though there is contact in those stages, the practice is not specifically concerned with it. In the early stages the objective is to establish mindfulness on the breathing itself. The breathing, as preparatory object of concentration or Preliminary Sign (*parikamma-nimitta*), is relatively gross. In the technique based on contact the mind is directed towards one particular point, the spot where the air touches the skin, and takes that as the Sign for a more refined kind of

practice. The meditator begins, therefore, to direct his whole attention to that point of contact and finally locates it at the nose tip. In this way the Sign, or object of concentration, is changed from the "flowing breath" to the nose tip. The nose tip then becomes the basis for another new sign called the Acquired Sign (*uggaha-nimitta*) to be utilized in the higher stages. The meditator then has to develop this new sign uninterruptedly. In the course of doing so he succeeds in surmounting various kinds of obstacles, details of which will be given later on. The step in which this new sign is firmly established is spoken of as Fixing (*ṭhapanā*). It culminates in the arising of the Counterpart Sign (*paṭibhaga-nimitta*); and following on this Counterpart Sign comes Absorption.

Once again let it be noted that Contact and Fixing are very closely related. In fact, it is not possible to draw a clear line between them. At whatever point mindfulness of breathing is established, Contact is present; and there too is Fixing, though it is not as yet recognized as such. When concentration on Contact can be maintained at will, Fixing is also established. In this step of Fixing there is "concentration

without concentrating," that is, concentration without conscious effort. In other words the conscious effort of concentrating has ceased because the state of concentration has been fully attained. This can be compared to the process of grasping an object with the hand. When the object has been grasped, then, although the hand is still holding it, the act of grasping is already accomplished. The object is in the state of "having been grasped," while the hand, having finished actively grasping it, merely holds it firmly fixed. Here "grasping" corresponds to Contact and the state of "hand holding firmly" corresponds to Fixing. Care is needed to distinguish between "grasping the object" and "state of the object's having been grasped," that is, between Contact and Fixing. The nature of Contact and Fixing must be clearly perceived by the meditator. Once he has perceived this, he can proceed to a more subtle Sign or object and thereby render the mind progressively calmer.

So Counting and Connecting are based on the Preparatory Sign (*parikamma-nimitta*), Contact has to do with the Acquired Sign (*uggaha-nimitta*), and Fixing with the Counterpart Sign (*paṭibhāga-*

nimitta). We shall now consider these three kinds of Sign in order the better to understand Contact and Fixing as well, the more refined techniques to follow.

The Signs, so called, are of three kinds. In the case of certain meditation objects (*kammaṭṭhāna*) not all three of the signs appear; such meditation objects do not result in absorption. The others, in which all three signs normally appear, do lead to absorption.

The sign of Stage I is the Preparatory Sign (*parikamma-nimitta*), the object that the meditator takes as his working ground for concentration in the preparatory stage. In the case of *ānāpānsati* it is the ever-moving breath. The second sign is the Acquired Sign (*uggaha-nimitta*). This sign is visualized, seen by the inner eye. Being a mental image, it is distinctly different from the sign taken as object in the preparatory stage. In *ānāpānasati* this second sign is a white point or spot seen as a clear mental image at the point of contact (*phusanā*), that is, at the nose tip. The third or Counterpart Sign (*paṭibhāga-nimitta*) is also a mental image, being a modified form of the Acquired Sign, which had by this stage undergone various chances in form, features,

colour, size, and so on. The Counterpart Sign can be shifted about at will. The meditator can maintain it in any particular state he wishes, and having established it firmly in one particular state, can use it as the most subtle and lofty foundation and stronghold of the mind. When the mind has this sign as its foundation and is completely absorbed in it, it attains the state called Absorption (*jhāna*).

To understand this phenomenon more easily we must compare *ānāpānasati* with meditation practices based on objects having a clear cut shape. In the practice of the *kasiṇas*, for instance, the meditator sets up a blue or red disc front of him and concentrates on it. In this case the Preparatory Sign is the disc itself. Concentrating on it is called Preparatory or Preliminary *Work* (*parikamma*). The Preparatory Work is completed when the meditator, after having concentrated on the sign continuously for some time, can see it clearly in his mind's eye. This new sign, seen with the inner eye as an image, is the Acquired Sign. It becomes in its turn the object of concentration. This makes clear the distinction between Preparatory Sign and Acquired Sign: the Preparatory Sign is the external device, the

Acquired Sign the mental image created by concentrating on the Preparatory Sign. Having concentrated steadily on this internal Acquired Sign until he is able to see it satisfactorily in its original form, the meditator then develops the ability to control and change its form and size. For example, the red or blue disc generally used has a diameter of about six inches. This may be magnified by the mind of the meditator to the size of the sun or moon or reduced to a mere point; or it may be changed in some other way. Eventually the features most suitable for concentration are developed and the Sign is stabilized in that form. When firmly established, in this way the Sign is said to be fixed or "nailed." This is Fixing, which will culminate in the attainment of absorption; and the sign that is so altered and stabilized is the Counterpart Sign.

As another example, consider the practice of meditating on various kinds of loathsomeness (*asubha-kammaṭṭhāna*). In contrast to the *kasiṇa* discs this kind of object is rather repulsive and tiresome. The meditator sits with a corpse of some kind in front of him and examines it closely, noting carefully all its features and characteristics. This corpse used as

object of contemplation is the Preparatory Sign. The next step consists in acquiring a mental image of the corpse so that it can be seen with the eyes shut at least as clearly as with them open. This picture of the corpse, this mental image which can be seen with the eyes shut is the Acquired Sign. The meditator next concentrates on this Acquired Sign in a more refined way so that he becomes successively more skilled in modifying it at will. He modifies it in such a way as to produce in himself a maximum of disenchantment and detachment towards objects of sensuality and a deep feeling for the ultimate destiny of mortals. Having done this, the meditator stabilizes the mental image in a certain form, which he retains as his concentration object. This final mental image is the Counterpart Sign.

Now in *ānāpānasati* the signs are just as explained above. In this case the breathing itself is the initial object of concentration or Preparatory Sign. In the next stage, instead of concentrating on the breathing as a whole, the meditator directs his attention to a particular point where the air touches the nostril. This point is visualized as a sensitive wound against which some object is rubbing roughly in and out.

While visualizing, there is no need to be conscious of the fact of breathing, or of air moving back and forth, or of anything whatever inside or out. Directing attention exclusively to that sensitive point results in the formation of a mental image, the Acquired Sign. This Acquired Sign is subject to change because of its dependence on various things, such as the breathing. As the breathing becomes progressively finer, so does the Acquired Sign. Again, changes are produced in the Sign by past images or memories peculiar to the individual. The Acquired Sign eventually becomes stabilized as the Counterpart Sign, which may appear as a fixed sensation other than the original one of touch. It has different forms for different individuals. To one type of person it is felt at or near the point of contact as a tuft of cotton or a puff of smoke. To another type it is seen vividly, as a round object hanging at the nostril, or as a round gem or pearl, or sometimes as a cotton seed. To another less numerous class of persons it appears as a wooden peg or a bunch of flowers or a garland or a spiral of smoke. To another still less numerous class of people it appears as a stretched cobweb, a film of irregular clouds, a lotus bloom, or a many-spoked wheel. And there is still

another type of person who sees the Counterpart Sign as a very large sun or moon. All these appearances or phenomena arising in the course of *ānāpānasati* are called Counterpart Signs. Though diverse in form, each one is nevertheless firm, fixed, a steady object for the mind to concentrate on in order to attain absorption.

With the breathing as object, the Counterpart Sign shows a much greater variety of form than it does with other meditation objects such as the *kasiṇa* discs or the aspects of foulness (*asubha*). There are two reasons for this: Firstly, breathing is subtle, lacking definite form; it cannot be distinctly visualized as can a *kasiṇa* disc or the limbs of a corpse. Secondly, and more importantly, each individual has his own characteristic store of memories of former sense impressions, accumulated over a long period and built into his character. They manifest in their various forms from out of the unconscious whenever they have an opportunity, as for instance when the mind is dwelling on the Acquired Sign. The signs created by the mind have varying characteristics because of these varying kinds of past impressions or memories built into the character of each

individual. The meditator should not allow himself to be disturbed by the inconsistency or unpredictability of these phenomena. To do so would result in uneasiness and obstruct the development of concentration. If, however, he chooses to delve into this subject, he will be following another quite different branch of psychology having nothing to do with the practice of mental development.

Now different meditation objects not only give rise to different kinds of signs; they also effect different kinds of changes in temperament. To give a concrete example, suppose a meditator takes an inanimate object such as a lump of yellow clay and having made it into a disc (yellow *kasiṇa*), concentrates on it. His mind will not be affected in the same way as it would if he were to contemplate a decomposed corpse. To be sure, contemplation of either of these objects leads to one-pointedness; but the effects are very different in the two cases. The two objects produce different results with regard to sensuality, greed, the nervous system, and so on. Reflection and experiment reveal that a lump of clay used as an object of meditation makes one feel heavy, passive, and sluggish. Being inanimate, it neither

stimulates nor harms the nerves. A corpse, on the other hand, is much more meaningful and may even suggest something supernatural ("more than alive") to a person who fears ghosts.

Ānāpānasati, in which breathing is the object of concentration, occupies a middle position. It neither induces passivity, as does a lump of clay, nor arouses feverish thrill, as does a decomposed corpse. Each Preparatory Sign produces its own characteristic results. This must be remembered: though any Preparatory Sign may give rise to an Acquired Sign and a Counterpart Sign and finally lead to absorption, nevertheless each one brings about its own characteristic side-effects. Certain meditation objects are designed to solve specific individual problems concerned with specific mental defilements *before* leading on to the usual goal (absorption). Other objects are less specific, forming a middle or "general" category. Among these *ānāpānasati* is the foremost. The sign produced by *ānāpānasati* is peaceful, calm, and fine from beginning to end. Being in the middle category, *ānāpānasati* is suitable for every kind of person, householder or monk, man or woman, bold or timid.

Certain meditation objects cannot give rise to a Counterpart Sign. Such are the concepts (*arūpa-dhammā*), for example the Virtues of the Buddha (*Buddha-guṇa*) used as meditation object. Such an object can be used only in the beginning as a Preparatory Sign, because meditation on a concept yields only knowledge. Unlike a *kasiṇa* disc or the breathing, a concept is intangible; no Acquired Sign arises from it. A concept such as the virtues of the Buddha cannot possibly transform itself into a mental image — unless the meditator is utterly creed-bound, in which case the image produced is irrelevant, a digression, and therefore disadvantageous. Since meditation practices like Recollection on the Buddha (*Buddhānussati*) cannot even give rise to an Acquired Sign, there is no possibility of attaining absorption by way *of* them. They are useful for other purposes, such as developing certain mental faculties and for calming the mind before embarking on the practice of the principal meditation object. Recollection on the Buddha cannot make the mind steady even to the extent produced by Counting or Connecting, let alone yield the degree of concentration attainable by Contact.

So the degree of concentration attainable depends on the object used. If, for a given meditation object, any of the three signs is lacking, or if one of the signs is in some way unsuitable, that meditation object will not yield the degree of concentration corresponding to Contact and Fixing.

Anyone who is really interested in the practice of *ānāpānasati* must understand the signs as to their characteristics and mode of arising. He must know how to concentrate on a sign, how to change it, and finally how to stabilize it. A meditator who understands all these things about the signs will be successful in concentrating on them. He will have no difficulty concentrating on the breathing, rendering it subtle, and being mindful of it throughout the entire practice.

CHAPTER VI

OBSTACLES TO ABSORPTION

We shall now discuss in detail the possible obstacles to the practice of concentration in STAGE IV, which consists in concentrating on the fine breathing, that is, on the thoroughly calmed "bodily formation."

Initial Obstacle: *Breathing too fine to be discerned.*

Inability to discern the breathing because it seems to have disappeared constitutes an Obstacle. The mind encountering this situation for the first time becomes agitated, doubtful, and worried. The problem can be dealt with in either of two ways:

(1) Breathe strongly and begin concentrating afresh. With certain adjustments this Obstacle is easily overcome and the practice goes ahead more smoothly than before.

(2) If this fails, or the meditator does not wish to revert to the coarse practice of the beginning stages,

he should simply comfort and encourage himself, determining boldly to bring back the breathing. Such a state of mind soon restores the breathing.

The technique by which the meditator comforts and encourages himself is as follows: Having taken several long breaths, he tells himself firmly: "The breathing has not really stopped at all. It is well known that the only individuals who do not breathe are: unborn babies, people with their heads under water, the Unconscious Beings (*asañña-satta*), the dead, meditators who have attained the Fourth Absorption, those who have attained to the Fine-Material and Non-Material Spheres, and finally those who have attained 'Cessation.' Since I am in none of these categories, I must be still breathing. The breathing is there." Once he has convinced himself about this, his mind becomes steady and the breathing becomes gently evident, despite its extreme fineness. In this way the meditator restores awareness of the breathing without having to begin afresh. Later he will realize why the breathing seemed to disappear. He will realize that it was partly because the breathing was so fine, partly because it became fine too quickly, partly, because the

point of Contact was not properly perceived, and partly because of haste and carelessness at the time of Fixing. Knowing about this technique, the meditator will be able to adjust and develop the various conditions leading to the reappearance of the breath. This done, the breathing becomes all the more clearly manifest and the problem of not being able to locate the breath is solved. Later the meditator will be able to discern the breathing in all the steps, Counting, Connecting, Contact, and Fixing. The problem of non-manifestation of the breath generally arises during Contact. The Counterpart Sign does not appear because the meditator fails to feel the breathing at the point of Contact. The point is not apparent, not perceived. He should solve this problem in the way described. When the Counterpart Sign, the new mental image, does arise, mindfulness must be directed towards it. Mindfulness is still associated with the breathing, though only indirectly. If the breathing is not rhythmical and Fixing is not firm, the sign may not arise at all, or if already arisen, may soon disappear.

One further point in this connection: As already mentioned, the Counterpart Sign can move from

the point of Contact (*phusanā*) to any other point in response to individual characteristics. It may move inwards and appear in the chest or the navel; and it may move outside and hang somewhere in front of the meditator. The point of Fixing must then he changed accordingly, attention being directed at the Sign by way of both Contact and Fixing. The meditator learns to do this with increasing flexibility and subtlety, and the breaths become progressively smoother as he does so, there being no need to be actively more conscious of them. So breathing may be taking place even if the meditator is not aware of it. He must, therefore, observe the breathing as clearly and as smoothly as he can, being in no doubt about its existence. He must not make the mistake of believing that the breathing has actually stopped: it is still there even though he cannot detect it — moreover, it is going on smoothly without his conscious control, a direct result of proper and adequate training. To sum up, the breathing does not actually stop, and if the meditator thinks it has stopped, he is mistaken. By applying either of the two techniques mentioned he will be able to discern the breaths which have merely become extremely fine. This is how to recog-

nize and overcome the obstacle that may arise at the beginning of Stage iv.

There are also certain general obstacles, which may arise at any stage of the practice. Some of them are encountered by certain individuals and not by others, depending on temperament. All the obstacles of this sort that different individuals may encounter are listed below. The meditator should clearly understand and get to know them.

(1) *Distraction inwards while mindful of out-breath.*

Here the meditator, while following the out-breath—regardless of whether or not he is discerning its beginning, middle and end—worries about when the breath will come back in. He feels uneasy and afraid, thinking: "The in-breath is going to be interrupted," or "The breath is not going to come back in at all." He may think: "The in-breath is going to be insufficient," or "The in-breath is going to be irregular." This uneasiness is an obstacle to concentration, even at a coarse level of practice. The meditator should make it a rule to be self-possessed and not give in to such anxieties and fears. Such

distraction of mind is not uncommon in the beginner. If he is not warned about it beforehand, his practice will be badly affected by it, and he will waste time unnecessarily.

(2) *Distraction outwards while mindful of in-breath.*

Having followed the in-breath to its end, the mind "rushes out." The meditator worries: "When will the breath go back out?" He waits anxiously, thinking: "When will it touch the point of contact on its way out?" and the like. This is what is meant by "distraction outwards." It is the converse of the first Obstacle. Combined, the two obstacles amount to this: While following the out-breath the mind is distracted inwards, that is, worries about the in-breath; and while following the in-breath, the mind is distracted outwards, worries about the out-breath. It is a general rule that, having finished with external things, one is concerned about inward things, and *vice versa*. These Obstacles arise naturally out of inborn character traits and excessive zeal. To avert all possibility of their arising, the meditator must have studied such things sufficiently and have adequate sense control before beginning

the practice. Moreover, he should not be concerned about the future. Now to the next pair of Obstacles.

(3) *Expectation, satisfaction, and craving with regard to the out-breath.*

(4) *Expectation, satisfaction, and craving with regard to the in-breath.*

These two are equally harmful to concentration. Anxious expectation and waiting for the out- or in-breath springs from fear that the breathing will disappear. The meditator fears that the disappearance of the breathing will suspend his practice and that he will not achieve the desired results. These Obstacles are particularly likely to arise in a person who is strongly attached to his practice. They are seldom met by people who practise wisely and in accordance with the practical advice they have received. They come when there is a feeling of satisfaction on account of the easy flowing of the out- or in-breath or-through over-enthusiasm. This feeling is powerful enough to distract the mind. It renders the breathing so gross that to calm it down becomes difficult. It makes the mind continually tense and so is

reckoned an Obstacle. Then from the feeling of satisfaction springs craving. The meditator is strongly attracted by in- or out-breaths. As a result both the mind and the breathing become rough and can be calmed down only with difficulty. So this second pair of Obstacles is harmful to concentration in the same way as the first. The third pair is:

(5) *Forgetting in-breath owing to domination by out-breath.*

(6) *Forgetting out-breath owing to domination by in-breath.*

Both of these faults are harmful to concentration. To be "dominated" by a breath is to be excessively interested in it. This happens if either the out-breath or the in-breath has some particular attraction that its counterpart lacks, as may be the case if the organ of breathing is not functioning well. For instance, the out-breath may proceed more comfortably than the in-breath, or *vice versa*. In either case it is an Obstacle. To put this another way: (1) Something may attract the meditator to either the in- or out-breath and make his attention one-sided. A beginner is very apt to divert his whole attention for a long time towards this unfamiliar phenomenon.

(2) The organ at which mindfulness is established may hinder the smooth passage of either in- or out-breath, so that the meditator fails to fix his mind at the single point of Contact throughout either part of the breathing cycle.

(7) *Distraction by out-breath while watching the sign.*

(8) *Distraction by sign while watching out-breath.*

These, too, are harmful to concentration. The sign referred to is the Acquired Sign at the Point of Contact. When the meditator directs his attention to this Acquired Sign, his mind, being concerned also with the breathing, wavers or falters. Conversely, when he pays too much attention to the breathing, the mind, which ought to be fixed on the sign, wavers. The two Obstacles arise because of disorderly practice through lack of understanding and anticipation. In the early stages of the practice these problems do not arise because the breathing itself is the sign. Later when they do arise, it is because the meditator is, in effect, trying to deal with two distinct objects of concentration at once. He is viewing the breathing from two different angles, seeing it as

both breathing and sign (Point of Contact). While he should be paying attention to the breathing as breathing, he is distracted by breathing as sign; and likewise for the reverse case. This is just clumsy practice. If the meditator fixes his attention firmly on the breathing alone, regarding the breathing itself as the sign, this Obstacle will not arise. This is how to deal with the problem in the stage where the breathing itself is the sign. This is the Obstacle with regard to the out-breath. The same kind of problem arises with regard to the in-breath:

(9) *Distraction by in-breath while watching the sign.*

(10) *Distraction by sign while watching in-breath.*

The significance of this pair is as for the preceding one. We can, therefore, consider both pairs together. While the breathing is still being used as the sign it should be regarded as such and not viewed from two different angles in the way described above. When the Acquired Sign arises, the meditator should take that very point (the Point of Contact) as the sign and not attempt to pay attention to the breathing as well. He should direct his attention exclusively to

the sensation at that point. 0nce the Counterpart Sign has arisen concentration on the breathing is to be put aside. While the mind is steadily directed to the mental image, the breathing continues rhythmically of its own accord. The mind is then fixed directly on the sign and is no longer concerned with the breathing. All this can be summarized in these three points:

(i) At the time of the Preparatory Sign, attention is being, given to both breathing and sign in one — since the breathing is the sign.

(ii) At the time of the Acquired Sign, attention is paid to the Point of Contact. This automatically implies attention to the breathing, of which it is a by-product. Attention is directed to the sign (the Point of Contact) rather than to the breathing; but since Contact is manifest only when the breath passes the Point, the meditator is in effect paying attention to both things in one.

(iii) Finally, at the time of the Counterpart Sign, attention is paid to the sign directly. The breathing is left unattended; it carries on

smoothly of its own accord. There is no need to give even indirect attention to the breathing.

These pairs of Obstacles can be destroyed by applying the appropriate technique at each of these three steps (that is, signs).

(11) *Attention to out-breath disturbed by in-breath.*

(12) *Attention to in-breath disturbed by out-breath.*

These two obstacles to concentration arise in the early stages. Here the meditator fails to fix his attention thoroughly on both in- and out-breath; he does not perceive the two breaths equally because of lack of understanding and excessive zeal. This pair resembles the first pair. The difference is that here the distraction is of a general nature; it concerns only observations of the breath and not thoughts and worries *about* the breath. Also, since attention is not equally fixed, the wavering of the mind may be caused by something having nothing to do with the breathing. In either case the meditator should steady his mind by finding and destroying the cause of the disturbance.

(13) *Distraction through running after the past.*

(14) *Wavering through looking forward to the future.*

The past makes the mind distracted; the future makes it waver. How do these two differ? Distraction or agitation of mind is caused by running after all sorts of past objects; wavering is caused by looking forward to one particular future object. The first step towards overcoming these two Obstacles is to rid the mind of its unwholesome state. The next step is: In the case of running after the past, establish the mind afresh at the point of Contact; in the case of looking forward to the future, bend the mind to the point of Contact. To understand these Obstacles the meditator must clearly understand what is meant by "establishing the mind afresh" and "bending the mind." If he has not yet earnestly established the mind, he should establish it afresh, earnestly. If he has tried to establish it but without success, he should try again. If he has not yet been able to discern where to establish it, he should repeatedly try to discern the spot, and, having discerned it, establish the mind afresh. This is what is meant. As to bending the mind, if attention is being given to a

wrong object, it should be diverted towards the right one, the point of Contact. The distracted mind has no fixed object. Even when running after past objects it is not content to remain fixed on any particular one. On the other hand the wavering mind delights in remaining fixed on one desirable future object. If the meditator knows well how to establish and bend the mind he can rid himself of these two Obstacles.

Anyone who understands what is being said here must acknowledge it as a fact of psychology that the effect on the mind of past objects is different from that of future objects. It must not be assumed that these two types of mental object produce the same kind of effect; it is not only in name that they differ. Past objects depend for their manifestation on past perceptions (*saññā*); future objects depend on feeling and reflection (*vedanā*, *vitakka*); Obviously then, their effects will differ. So a clear understand of the nature of feeling and reflection is naturally a great asset in establishing and bending the mind as required.

Now we come back to "ridding the mind of its unwholesome state," the first step, to be taken before establishing and bending the mind. To rid the mind

of its unwholesome state two techniques are available: will-power and reasoning. First the meditator should exercise his will to prevent the recurrence of past impressions, that is, memories. At the same time he should direct his thoughts toward the sign or object of concentration. If that fails, if memories keep on recurring stubbornly, he should resort to wise consideration. He should consider wisely that both the past happening and the memory of it are things compounded, insubstantial things, not selves. Once the meditator succeeds seeing them in this way, he is able to rid his mind of its unwholesome state of running after past memories. The same principle applies in the case of looking forward to the future, the only difference being that here it is feeling and reflection that are to be taken into account. Here "feeling" refers of fascination with regard to some anticipated event, and "reflection" refers to thought about that event. The meditator should consider wisely that both feeling and reflection are mere shadows, nebulous things. Like memories, they are compounded things, impermanent, unsatisfactory, and insubstantial. By considering feeling and reflection in this way, he can do away with them and so rid the mind of its unwholesome

state of looking forward to the future. Thus the meditator frees his mind of distraction and wavering and establishes it at — or bends it to — the present object of concentration.

These two Obstacles may arise at any time. They are most likely to arise in the early steps of Counting and Connecting, concerned with the Preparatory Sign. They may also arise during Contact, which is concerned with the Acquired Sign, but not if well beaten down at the stage of the Preparatory Sign. The meditator should realize also that all the Preliminaries and Impediments discussed in the beginning are concerned with these two Obstacles. Here the importance of the so-called subsidiary meditation objects should be realized. Since they give these Obstacles little chance to arise they are conducive to success with the principal meditation object.

(15) *Indolence due to slackness.*

(16) *Agitation due to over-exertion.*

These two Obstacles may arise at any time, but obviously not simultaneously, as can some of the

other pairs. Slackness of mind is a condition in which the mind is spiritless or shrunken in spirit. Slackness of mind results in wrong practice, bad health, poor physique, and weak Mental Faculties (Confidence, Energy, Mindfulness, Concentration, and Insight). Also included under slackness of mind are dullness, drowsiness, exhaustion, boredom, and all other mental states resulting in depression, including lack of genuine interest in the practice. Thus slackness of mind takes many forms.

To rid himself of this Obstacle the meditator is advised to "uplift the mind and free it of indolence." The technique for uplifting the mind must be understood and practised with the utmost care. The meditator must first clear away any outward — that is, physical — stumbling-block and then must turn inwards to stimulate the mind. For instance, if his body is not well, his food is not suitable, or any other of the Beneficial Things is lacking, then he must remedy the want before turning to the mind itself. To arouse the mind, the meditator must wisely stimulate and intensify the will or zeal (*chanda*) for developing mindfulness. There are many ways of doing this, and the meditator should choose the one

suitable to himself. If he cannot make the choice himself, he should go to a good friend or to his teacher, who may be able to help him considerably. The meditator can stimulate his will or zeal by making some external object the centre of his thoughts. He should think of some person in whom he has confidence, the Buddha, for instance, and recollect that person's qualities. Recollection of the qualities of the Buddha will generate in the meditator confidence and a sense of deep respect, and thus the necessary eagerness and willingness for further practice. Or the meditator should think of some person who is his "idol" and the embodiment of perseverance. He should think: "He is a man, so am I. If he can practice, so can I." He should also reflect on his own personality, thinking "I am still subject to suffering, still involved in the cycle of *saṃsāra*. The way I am practising is the only way leading to the cessation of those conditions. There is no way other than this." The more he thinks on these lines, the more he realizes the importance of the practice of Dhamma. By thinking, both subjectively and objectively in this way he can uplift his mind; and with the mind uplifted the Mental Faculties are gradually strengthened and slackness and dullness destroyed.

The more skilful a meditator he is, the more ways and means he can find of uplifting his mind. When the Mental Faculties are strengthened, zeal, energy, (purity of) consciousness, and investigation (the four Bases of Success, *iddhipāda*) are engendered and developed. Thus the way of thinking just described is effective in achieving success in the practice. Some may try to stimulate their minds to practice by thinking of wealth, name and fame, and the like. But that is too low an objective to engender will or zeal. It cannot be compared with the inspiration found in practising out of regard for one's parents, for a person having great expectation of one, for the Buddha, or the superiority of the teaching. And of course the best stimulus of all is the thought of one's own freedom. To sum up, if the mind is slack and indolent it should be made alert by uplifting it in the way described.

The second Obstacle in this pair is over-exertion which gives rise to agitation. Slackness and agitation are exactly opposite states of mind, so the ways of getting rid of them are quite distinct. To overcome agitation the meditator is advised to "restrain the mind and be free from agitation." To over-exert is to

be too energetic. As always the meditator must avoid extremes and keep to the golden mean. To be energetic is good but only in moderation. The meditator must not be inspired by vanity, not practise with an eager appetite as the common worlding does. When a person is over-energetic, craving, vanity, stubbornness, and ignorance arise. The meditator must know just how much exertion is required to achieve success. The habit of using too much bodily and mental power gives rise to agitation. For example, forcing oneself to sit in meditation for long periods results in bodily pain, which in its turn agitates the mind. If, while developing insight, one contemplates with too much eagerness and too little steady watchfulness, the mind will be easily agitated. When either the body or the mind is not at ease, not in its normal state, the mind cannot be restrained. In such a condition sleep is impossible; for though the body may be sleeping, the mind is actively dreaming.

The meditator can succeed in restraining his mind by directly guarding it and by checking the cause of its agitation. Gradually eradicating the outer and inner—that is, physical and mental causes, he gets rid of the agitation itself. In some cases both body and

mind should be given a rest for some time. To rest the body and the mind the practice should be temporarily stopped; or the meditator should temporarily stop practising with a subtle object of concentration and come down to a lower stage with a gross object. These are examples of different methods for keeping energy within the required limit. The meditator should not use force or coercion in restraining the mind any more than the farmer should seize his cow by the horns and force it to eat grass, or use his sickle so vigorously that he breaks it. To quieten his agitated mind, the meditator must use his intelligence.

These two Obstacles are more difficult to deal with than any of the preceding ones: they arise more easily, and there are many more things relating to them that have to be studied, controlled, and rectified. We come now to the last pair

(17) *Desire (rāga) due to over-sensitivity.*

(18) *Ill-will (vyāpāda) due to lack of feeling or dullness.*

The first of these consists in the mind's being excessively keen and alive to impressions. It is too sensi-

tive in that it falsely expands the horizon of its sensitivity. Here daydreaming is included. True, the mind in this state is, in a way, observant and perceptive; but his sensitivity is out of control and hence harmful to concentration. Sensitivity, useful in other situations, may be a barrier to the development of concentration. The imagination and sensitivity of the artist are very useful in the creating of a wonderful work of art, but in the practice of concentration they can be thoroughly destructive. For the meditator over-sensitivity of mind is truly a great source of difficulty. Everyone naturally likes attractive objects; and when, in the concentrated state, a person becomes more perceptive and sensitive than usual, this instinctive liking is very often transformed into a passion resembling sensual desire (*kāma-chanda*).

To free the mind of this Obstacle the meditator is advised "to be fully aware (*sampajāno*) of the mind and be free from passion." To understand this method clearly, we must consider the literal meanings of the terms used. The Obstacle here is the condition in which the mind is over-sensitive (*abhiññāta*). *Abhiññāta* means literally "knowing

much," which here implies knowing too much. The way to overcome this is to be *sampajāno*, fully aware. Literally *sampajāno* means "knowing thoroughly, altogether." When the literal meanings are considered, it can easily be, seen that these two conditions are totally opposed to each other. In the first case (*abhiññāta*) the meditator is bemused, his thoughts and fantasies run on uncontrolled; in the second (*sampajāno*) he is thoroughly careful, aware, and mindful. Obviously full awareness and mindfulness are instrumental in getting rid of oversensitivity and preventing the arising of passion.

The meditator should apply this full awareness and mindfulness in two ways. Firstly, he should be careful not to grasp at external forms, sounds, smells, tastes, and tangible objects in such a way as to give rise to pleasant feelings. Secondly, he should not let the mind grasp at internal (mental) objects or dwell on past experiences. The power of imagination and the tendency to interpret sense objects should be well controlled. For instance, if the meditator sees an object of a particular shape and pattern, he must beware; he must not, as is his habit, project some image which will give rise to sensual desire. The

controlling of this inherent tendency to project requires full awareness and a high degree of mindfulness. In short, over-sensitivity, which leads to passion, is to be prevented and cured with mindfulness and full awareness. Note that the contemplation of foulness (*asubha-kammaṭṭhāna*) is *not* recommended. That practice would not be appropriate in this situation, differing as it does from that described in CHAPTER III. The Obstacle here is over-sensitivity due to the mind's tendency to project images in its characteristically bizarre fashion. This tendency must be checked with mindfulness and awareness. Here the contemplation of foulness would have the wrong effect. Even prolonged contemplation of foulness will not destroy this particular Obstacle.

The second Obstacle in this pair is just the opposite of the first. "Dullness" and "lack of feeling" imply absence of illuminating knowledge, absence of joyful and tranquillizing feelings. The mind, being dull for want of clear comprehension, is finally overcome by ill-will. Here ill-will means not just hatred, but dissatisfaction of any kind. It means in particular *paṭigha*, that is, vexation and uneasiness,

annoyance—with other people, with oneself, with external objects, or with nothing in particular. It means irritation, or just a bad mood.

Ill-will is to be overcome in the same way as desire. To generate loving-kindness (*mettā-bhāvanā*) is not advisable; instead, mindfulness and full awareness should be developed as before. When one is mindful and fully aware, dullness and obscurity cannot arise. Thus both Obstacles of this pair are to be overcome by developing uninterrupted mindfulness and awareness. This Obstacle is called in Pali *apaññatam*, which means "not bright" "not luminous," "dull," and therefore to be overcome only by mindfulness and awareness.

These eighteen Obstacles in nine pairs are called in Pali the *upakilesa*. They are also known as the Perils; because they are dangerous to the practice of concentration. When any of them arises both body and mind become troubled, agitated; when they are absent, concentration can be developed easily. Other Obstacles, known as the Minor Obstacles, are relatively unimportant; they can easily he overcome once these major ones have been destroyed. A mind

freed of all these Obstacles is said to be fully purified, or to have attained Unique Excellence (*ekatta*).

Unique Excellence of mind has the following four levels:

(1) Unique Excellence due to making gifts or offerings — for people who delight in making offerings.

(2) Unique Excellence due to the manifestation of the sign of concentration — for those who practise tranquillity meditation.

(3) Unique Excellence due to the clear comprehension of impermanence, unsatisfactoriness, and non-selfhood — for those who develop insight meditation.

(4) Unique Excellence due to the realization of the extinction of suffering — for the "Noble Ones."

Of these four levels we are here concerned with the second, the steady and clear manifestation of the sign. This Unique Excellence has three aspects, which are characteristics of the First Absorption (*paṭhama-jhāna*). Their arising indicates perfection

in developing concentration at the first level. These three aspects are:

(1) Mental brightness, due to perfection in every point of the practice. When the mind has overcome all the eighteen Obstacles in the way described, the practice progressively attains perfection and the mind becomes bright.

(2) Mental maturity, due to equanimity. Here the mind, being undisturbed by obstacles, is set at rest and becomes cool. This state of equanimity, another factor of the First Absorption, brings about mental maturity.

(3) Joy, due to knowledge (*ñāṇa*). Here the mind, being endowed with brightness and maturity, is in a joyful state. This joy results from the knowledge of the destruction of the Obstacles and of the Factors of *Jhāna*. Experiencing the rapture, and happiness that come of detachment, the mind becomes joyful.

These three are characteristics of the First Absorption or *Jhāna*. Thus this First *Jhāna is* "glorious in its beginning, glorious in its progress, and glorious

in its consummation.” It is “glorious in its beginning” because the mind is bright owing to the perfection of the practice; glorious in its progress” because the mind attains maturity through equanimity; and “glorious in its consummation” because the mind is made joyful by knowledge of the destruction of the Obstacles. In order to understand these three it is important to know about the five Hindrances and the five Factors of the First *Jhāna*. This knowledge will also show us clearly how the mind, having passed through the stages of Acquired Sign and Counterpart Sign, attains full concentration (*appanā-samādhi*) in the First *Jhāna*.

Chapter VII

Hindrances And Jhāna Factors

The Pali term for "Hindrance" is *nīvaraṇa*. It implies something that destroys the harmonious condition of the mind, that is, its unique Excellence. Each of the Hindrances destroys one particular factor of the mind's Unique Excellence, and in considering them, we shall pair them off accordingly.

(1) The Hindrance of Sensual Desire (*kāma-chanda*) is paired with its opposite, Renunciation (*nekkhamma*). Sensual Desire is satisfaction with, absorption in, or delight in, anything pleasant, anything which allures and fascinates the mind, defiling its brightness. It is like a red dye, which, when mixed with clear water, makes it no longer clear, so that things lying on the bottom cannot be seen. The opposite factor, Renunciation, is the quality of a mind that is not tempted, not troubled, not clouded by sensual desire. It is the first Factor of Unique Excellence.

(2) Ill-will (*vyāpāda*) is paired with Good-will (*avyāpāda*). A mind having Ill-will is defiled by anger (*dosa*) in the form of disagreement, discontent, annoyance, or any such undesirable and harmful state. In the state of Ill-will the mind is "boiling" and therefore not clear—just as water when it is boiling is no longer clear so that things lying on the bottom cannot be seen. Good-will implies a mind that is cool, peaceful, free from any displeasing quality, not irritated in any way. It is the second Factor of Unique Excellence.

(3) Torpor (*thīna-middha*) is paired with Perception of Light (*āloka-saññā*). "Torpor" means here dullness, apathy, drowsiness, boredom. The mind overpowered by this Hindrance loses its brightness, just as pure water loses its clarity when overgrown by algae and weeds, so that things like pebbles lying on the bottom cannot be seen. Thus torpor is a Hindrance, damaging the mind, making it unworkable. Perception of Light is a form of practice that gives rise to constant, steady bright light resembling sunshine. This light and the time of its appearance are conditioned by character and training. The development of Perception of Light, making the

mind bright as if perceiving sunshine, enables one to overcome sleepiness, dullness, and laxity. It enables one to sleep soundly when one does sleep, and when awake, to be *wide* awake. Perception of Light is thus the very best means of awakening the mind, the antidote for Torpor.

(4) Restlessness and Worry (*uddhacca-kukkucca*) is paired with Steadiness (*avikkhepa*). *Uddhacca-kukkucca* means restlessness, vexation, worry. The difference between *uddhacca* and *kukkucca* can be understood if the literal meanings of the terms are considered. *Uddhacca* has the meaning of bursting out, spreading, scattering. It is the spreading out or scattering of thoughts as a result of too much liking or interest. *Kukkucca* is uneasiness and worry through not knowing how to do something, and where; or, knowing this, being dissatisfied, not pleased. This happens when one is agitated by outward things because of one's temperament or through excessive and prolonged effort, which makes everything go wrong. The mind overpowered by both components of this Hindrance is deprived of its clarity in yet another way. Just as clear water when whipped up by the wind develops

waves and is no longer clear so that things lying on the bottom cannot be seen, so the mind becomes stirred up and agitated by this Hindrance. *Avikkhepa* means “absence of Shaking,” absence of any swaying this way and that. Applied to the mind it indicates that the mind is steady and firm by itself and able to withstand disturbances without wavering. The mind is then in its “original” state; hence this factor is counted as another aspect of the mind’s Unique Excellence. This virtue can be developed only by earnest practice because it is in the nature of the mind to change and waver.

(5) Sceptical Doubt (*vicikicchā*) is paired with Defining of Things (*dhamma-vavatthāna*): *Vicikicchā* means scepticism or doubt, lack of confidence in the method of practice. A meditator with this Hindrance has no confidence in Buddha, Dhamma, and Sangha, in the enlightenment of the Buddha, or in the way of practice laid down by him. He believes in them only half-heartedly. The most important aspect of Doubt is that relating to the meditator’s own practice. Overpowered by this uncertainty, his mind loses its clarity and is unable to see things clearly, as they really are. It is like water that is

clear but in darkness, so that, once again, things on the bottom cannot be seen. *Dhamma-vavatthāna* means knowing something precisely and clearly, having no doubt at all about it. Every person ought in his way of life and in his job to have some ideal. And in his work, both mental and physical, everyone ought to know what is good and what is bad, what is beneficial and what is harmful, what constitutes happiness and what constitutes suffering, which is the way to downfall and which is the way to success, to the attainment of the Highest Fruits and ultimately Nirvāṇa. *Dhammavatthāna* derives from study by way of listening, reading, thinking, enquiring, discussing, and remembering, until one has knowledge and is certain about it at all times. One should have no doubt or hesitation as to what to do and how to do it. Doubt disturbs and torments the mind deeply. *Dhammavavatthāna* does just the opposite and is therefore one of the Factors of Unique Excellence.

In the original texts only five Hindrances are mentioned, though in some post-canonical works, for instance the "Patisambhidā-Magga," another three are listed. These three extra Hindrances are the oppo-

sites of the last three Factors of Unique Excellence, as follows:

(1) Ignorance or Lack of Knowledge (*avijjā* or *aññāṇa*) contrasts with Knowledge (*ñāṇa*).

(2) Aversion (*arati*) contrasts with Joy (*pāmujja*).

(3) The totality of unprofitable mental states (*sabbe akusalā dhammā*) contrast with the profitable states (*sabbe kusalā dhammā*). Clearly Ignorance is included in Doubt and Aversion in Ill-will. The totality of unprofitable states not specifically named is included in one or other of the five Hindrances. Thus the number of Hindrances is in fact unlimited. Any mental impurity can be reckoned a Hindrance. The Pali term *pañcanīvaraṇa* (Five Hindrances) is the one originally used by the Buddha. It has become such a familiar term that people know of no Hindrances other than those traditional five.

The term *nīvaraṇa* means, in general, "that which hinders by covering." The *Nīvaraṇas* or Hindrances cover up and obstruct good qualities and the way to

Nirvāṇa. But in the case of concentration, the commentaries define a *Nīvaraṇa* as something that covers beings or the minds of beings, preventing them from knowing the Truth or Dhamma; in other words, a *Nīvaraṇa* is that which covers the way leading beings out of suffering. What is covered is the Factors of Unique Excellence. The following example may clarify this: Renunciation (*nekkhamma*), that is to say, Renunciation of Sensual Desire, is a way out for Ariyans. The Ariyans or "Noble Ones," become free of suffering by way of Renunciation. Conversely, Sensual Desire (*kāmachanda*) covers up Renunciation, obstructs it, suppresses it, and grows at the expense of it. Hence Sensual Desire is reckoned a *Nīvaraṇa*, something covering and obscuring the Truth that leads the Noble Ones out of suffering. Worldlings are not aware that Renunciation is the Ariyan's way out from suffering, because their minds are clouded and covered over by Sensual Desire. Two cases have to be distinguished: In the first the Factors of Unique Excellence are covered by Hindrances and cannot arise in the mind; in the second the mind, being covered by the Hindrances, cannot realize the Factors of Unique Excellence. In either case the result is the same: the mind is

perpetually veiled by Hindrances. In simple words, a Hindrance or *Nīvaraṇa* is something that covers the minds making it depressed, uneasy, distracted, depriving it of peace and happiness.

The immediate aim of concentration practice is to free the mind of Hindrances. The state in which the mind is without Hindrances and that in which the mind is concentrated are one and the same. Sometimes, when the mind is free from hindrances, natural concentration is attained automatically. But the kind of concentration we are discussing here is that in which the Hindrances are destroyed by active practice. Natural concentration frees the mind from Hindrances only by chance. This is called *Tadaṅga-vimutti*, a state of freedom that comes about because the specific beneficial factors necessary for neutralizing the corresponding Hindrances happen, just by chance to arise in the mind. The other kind of concentration is that which is developed by active practice and by whose power the Hindrances are driven out. The state of freedom it results in is called *Vikkhambhana-vimutti.* But as soon as the mind returns to the unconcentrated condition, the Hindrances come back because their roots have not

yet been completely destroyed. To destroy the roots of the Hindrances a higher level of practice is needed, namely *vipassanā.* The state of freedom in which the mind is never again disturbed by the Hindrances is called *Samuccheda-vimutti*, which means complete destruction of or emancipation from all Hindrances. So there are three states of freedom from Hindrances, according to whether that freedom was attained by chance, by tranquillity meditation, or by insight meditation. The first and second states are temporary; the third is permanent.

The meditator should not merely study and remember matters concerning the Hindrances; he should also know and see clearly in his own mind just what they are and be aware of their presence or absence. He should know in which ways Hindrances disturb him. This will make him realize just how dangerous they are so that he will be resolute and unwavering in his attempts to destroy them. Then, even though the Hindrances may not have been completely destroyed, he can live happily in the here and now, since he knows how to cope with them; and eventually he will put an end to them completely. Obviously, freedom from the Hindrances is in itself happiness. This is the

first step and is also the foundation for the further practice, which will eventually destroy the roots of all the Hindrances completely. Thus the *Nīvaraṇa* may be destroyed utterly—and that is the permanent extinction of suffering.

The stage of the practice with which we are concerned here is concentration; the practice of insight comes later. As far as the Hindrances are concerned our present task is to practise tranquillity meditation in order to restrain the Hindrances and remove them from the mind by developing the qualities opposed to them. The technique for attaining this concentrated state is mindfulness of breathing, "tethering the mind to the post of breathing" until all the Beneficial Factors arise. As each of these Factors is unique and opposed to a specific Hindrance, the Hindrances have no chance to overpower the mind as long as mindfulness is maintained. When the mind is fixed on the breathing or whatever the object of concentration happens to be, Hindrances are absent and only Beneficial Factors present. The meditator must understand clearly how to develop the Factors of Unique Excellence. Renunciation, for example, can be said to come into existence at the

very moment of going into retreat in order to practise, and to increase from then on. It starts to develop and establish itself from the stage of Counting or concentrating on the breathing itself, and by the stage of the Counterpart Sign (*paṭibhaga-nimitta*) it is perfectly developed. Other specific Beneficial Factors such as Good-will are developed in the same way. All this will be easier to understand after we have discussed each Factor of Absorption (*jhānaṅga*) and its corresponding Factor of Unique Excellence. We turn therefore to the Factors of Absorption.

The Pali term *jhānaṅga* literally means "constituent of absorption." No factor by itself constitutes absorption; several must be present together to make the *jhāna*. The First *Jhāna* has five constituents, the Second three, the Third two, and the Fourth also two. The five factors of the First *Jhāna* are: *Vitakka*, *Vicāra*, *Pīti*, *Sukha*, and *Ekaggatā*. They are explained as follows:

(1) *Vitakka*: This word generally has the meaning of thinking or considering; but as a technical term in meditation it does not mean that unless,

that is, we understand by "thinking" not consideration of some matter but close attention of the mind to one single object. The factor *vitakka is* poorly developed during Counting and Connecting, and fully developed during Contact and Fixing. To be understood properly *Vitakka* must be considered together with *Vicāra*.

(2) The term *vicāra* usually means investigation; but in the technical language of meditation it means something different. It refers to the state in which the mind thoroughly knows the concentration object, namely the breath. *Vicāra* first appears in the stage of Connecting (see page 150). *Vitakka* and *Vicāra* are best explained on the analogy of examining an object. *Vitakka* corresponds to the act of looking at the object and fixing the eyes on it; *Vicāra* corresponds to seeing and knowing the object thoroughly. Or they may be compared to the sprinkling of water. When the water touches the earth on which it is sprinkled, that is *Vitakka*; when the water is absorbed by the earth, that is *Vicāra*. Again, there is the well known analogy of training a calf. The calf to be trained is separated from its mother and tethered to a post. The calf is the mind,

the post is the breath, and the tether is mindfulness. The calf's being tied to the post *is Vitakka*, its prancing around the post *Vicāra*. The meditator should observe the distinction between these two and should also understand how it is that they may be present at the same time. The state of the calf's being tied is simultaneous with its prancing, and *vice versa*. Although these two states, being tied and prancing are simultaneous, they are not the same in nature. Having understood this, the meditator will understand how *Vitakka* and *Vicāra* are simultaneously present in the First *Jhāna*. This can be further clarified by the analogy of the man polishing a pot. The man holds the pot with his left hand and polishes it with his right. The acts of holding and polishing are simultaneous. The left hand corresponds to *Vitakka*, the right to *Vicāra*. To sum up, *Vitakka* and *Vicāra* are two simultaneous and interrelated characteristics of the mind, *Vitakka* being the concentration on the Sign and *Vicāra* the close association with it.

(3) *Pīti* generally means rapture, and this is the meaning it has in the technical language of meditation also. It is defined as "Joy dissociated from

sensual desire." Rapture free from sensual desire results only from such feelings as: "I have achieved what was to be done," "I shall surely succeed," and the like. This kind of Rapture is associated with renunciation rather than with sensual desire. *Pīti* could, then, be defined as Rapture resulting from success in overcoming sensual desire. Rapture is regarded as a wholesome Mental Factor (*cetasika*) belonging to the Group of Feelings (*vedanā-khandha*). This is the difference between Rapture (*pīti*) *and* Happiness (*sukha*): Rapture belongs to the Group of Mental Formations and Happiness to that of Feelings. Rapture is the source of Happiness.

(4) *Sukha* means Happiness that arises because the mind is not disturbed by the Hindrances and is suffused with Rapture. In every-day life when we enjoy Rapture it is impossible not to feel happy as well; but such happiness lasts only a short while. More lasting is the Happiness that arises when the mind is undisturbed, by the Hindrances. Once the nature of Happiness is understood, it becomes easy to see that Rapture and Happiness are two different states, though they can, like *Vitakka* and *Vicāra*, exist simultaneously.

(5) *Ekaggatā* is short *for cittekaggatā or citta-ekaggatā*, which means mental one-pointedness. The mind in this state has just one single object, on which it is concentrated, just one point, on which it is fixed and established. Now, ordinarily the mind skips and flutters, from object to object, always shifting and changing, being light and easily influenced. Only when it has been properly trained can it become steady and fixed on a single object for any length of time. In concentration practice *ekggatā* refers to the state in which the mind is firm and steady following the practice of Fixing (*ṭhapanā*) on the Counterpart Sign. At the stage before Fixing the mind is only intermittently one-pointed. *Ekkaggatā* is concentration or *samādhi* in the true sense of the word. In some texts *Ekaggatā* is also called *Adhiṭṭhāni* (fixity).

We shall now discuss how the *Jhāna* Factors exist in the mind and how their functions are interrelated in the First Absorption. In the First *Jhāna* all five Factors are present and co-ordinated to make a single whole. Now it may be asked how five factors can be present simultaneously, while the mind is concentrated on just one object, one-pointed, with-

out thinking. Anyone who does not know the answer to this question cannot understand what is meant by "concentration at the stage of the First Absorption."

First of all "it must be understood that these so-called Factors are merely constituents or components, which combine to make up the whole, just as a rope composed of five strands is regarded as one rope, or a sweet having five different ingredients as one sweet. This is what the word "factor" or "constituent", *means*. In the First *Jhāna* the five associated Factors are present in the mind simultaneously. Each is firm in itself; and at the same time each supports and is supported by the others. They are like five poles which are already fixed firmly in the ground and become all the firmer when joined together at the top.

With the Counterpart Sign (*paṭibhāga-mitta*) firmly established, the mind has Full Concentration (*appanā*), firm collectedness, which means that the five Factors are joined together as a single whole. This state is called *Jhāna*, firm concentration. With

the appearance of the Counterpart Sign, *Vitakka* is no longer present in the form of concentration of the in- and out-breaths, having been transformed into concentration on "air at one point." It is not that *Vitakka* fades away in the early stages of Counting and Connecting and Contact, but that it becomes progressively more subtle and calm, and remains so right up to the stage of Fixing or the Counterpart Sign. In the same way *Vicāra* is present from the very start of the practice, becoming finer and finer right up to the stage of Fixing, at which point it helps the mind to perceive the Counterpart Sign and to comprehend it thoroughly. *Vicāra* and *Vitakka* collaborate right from the beginning, and so *Vicāra* is fully present at the stage of the Counterpart Sign. Then Rapture. (*pīti*) arises, at first only slightly, as a natural successor to *Vitakka* and *Vicāra*. In fact Rapture is present right from the beginning steps, even during the practice of Connecting and Contact, though then only intermittently, only in fits and starts. When *Vitakka* and *Vicāra* become firmer and subtler Rapture is also present, even at the stage of Fixing or the arising of the Counterpart Sign. Happiness (*sukha*) is present also, as it always is when there

is Rapture. The state in which the mind is firmly fixed on the Counterpart Sign without wavering is called One-pointedness (*ekaggatā*). Thus with the arising of the Counterpart Sign all five *Jhāna* Factors are fully established.

When the mind, by way of the Counterpart Sign, has attained Full Concentration in the First Absorption, the five Factors are established simultaneously and interdependently as constituents of *Jhāna.* At this stage there is no need to pay attention to the image or Counterpart Sign because the *Jhāna* factors establish themselves in its place. Thus there remains only a natural automatic supervising by the power of the five Factors harmoniously combined. It is as if a driver were sitting in his cart, holding the reins unworried while a docile horse pulls the cart along a smooth road. It must not be thought that the five Factors have to be established intentionally, one by one. The harmony and unintentional unification of the five Factors comes about simply as a result of proper practice, just as, in the case of the cart, everything goes smoothly even though the driver, holding the reins indifferently, is not actively concerned.

It should also be realized that each of the five *Jhāna* Factors is like one single object which can appear different when seen from different angles. The characteristics of each Factor change with the passing of time and progress through the stages of the practice. To clarify this we return to the analogy of training the calf. Consider the situation in which the calf has already been subdued, become perfectly obedient to its owner, and is lying peacefully by the post. Let us review the process of training and see which characteristics remain of those present in the beginning. At first the calf, on being tied up, jumps to and fro and prances around the post. The conditions of being tied and, prancing about correspond to *Vitakka* and *Vicāra*. But now the behaviour of the calf has changed these characteristics corresponding to *Vitakka* and *Vicāra*. The calf is lying peacefully close to the post. The characteristic of being tied corresponds to *Vitakka*, and that of lying close to the post to *Vicāra*. Essentially both characteristics remain, though they have been changed in form: the calf has become gentle. At first the calf was obstinate, disliked the owner, and delighted in disobeying him. Now it is content to be familiar with the

owner and delights in obeying him. This corresponds to Rapture. Happiness corresponds to the condition in which the calf sleeps undisturbed because the owner does not strike it and the rope does not chafe it as a result of its own struggling. And the last Factor, one-pointedness, corresponds to the calf's not leaving the post, but staying by it permanently. The five characteristics of the calf's behaviour together constitute the training of it; and they correspond to the five Factors of the First *Jhāna*, which together constitute success in developing this level of concentration.

The five *Jhāna* Factors are not to be developed intentionally and separately; they are results of one single practice, the *Jhāna*, which has five different characteristics as it is viewed from different angles. And it is for this very reason that the *Jhāna* Factors can exist spontaneously in the one mind; and at the one time. Understanding this clears up once and for all the question how five mental states can exist in the one *Jhāna*.

Now we discuss how each *Jhāna* Factor is effective in destroying one of the five Hindrances. To under-

stand this one must know which *Jhāna* factor is opposed to which Hindrance. This can be seen by examining their effects. *Vitakka* implies fixing the mind on any single object. As long as *Vitakka* is present the Hindrances that are opposite in character, such as Restlessness and Worry, cannot arise. Sensual Desire cannot arise either, because the mind is fixed on the concentration object. The same holds good of *Vicāra.* As long as *Vicāra* is present there is activity without hesitation or interruption, and thus Sceptical Doubt is directly diminished. Rapture and Happiness are the natural enemies of Ill-will and Torpor. They also diminish Sensual Desire because, although they do bear some resemblance to desire, their object is the very opposite of sensuality. While Sensual Desire is very much concerned with and dependent on sense objects, Rapture and Happiness are dependent on renunciation of them. As for one-pointedness, it diminishes all five Hindrances.

Thus each *Jhāna* Factor is opposed to a particular Hindrance, and is also to some extent an enemy to all the other Hindrances. Like darkness and light, these two opposed group cannot exist together.

The Hindrances begin to diminish from the time of Neighbourhood concentration (*upacāra-samādhi*), that is, before *Jhāna* appears. Once *Jhāna* or Full Concentration (*appanā-samādhi*) has been attained, all five *Jhāna* Factors are fully developed. It is not the case that any particular *Jhāna* Factor subdues only that Hindrance which is its paired opposite; nor is it the case that all the *Jhāna* Factors have to be gathered in *appanā-samādhi* before the Hindrances can be driven out; this process of eradication has been going on since *Upacāra-samādhi.* As a matter of fact the Hindrances begin to disappear at the stage of fixing the mind on the Preparatory Sign, and from the stage of the Acquired Sign onward they are completely absent. As long as any Hindrance remains the Acquired Sign will not appear. Thus when the stage of the Counterpart Sign is reached, the Hindrances have already completely disappeared, even though the *Jhāna* Factors have not yet arisen in full strength and concentration is only at the level of Neighbourhood Concentration. When all five *Jhāna* Factors appear clearly and firmly in the form of Full Concentration of *Jhāna*, then the Hindrances are eliminated; and they remain absent for the entire duration of the

Jhāna, even when only a trace of it remains, namely the Happiness that arises out of concentration. In order to understand this fully we must consider the different kinds of *Samādhi.*

CHAPTER VIII

PROGRESS TOWARDS ABSORPTION

Genuine *Samādhi* or concentration is of two kinds: *Upacāra-samādhi* and *Appanā-samādhi*. *Upacāra-samādhi* is, literally, Neighbourhood Concentration, a level of concentration approaching very near *Jhāna*, almost attaining it, in fact. *Appanā-samādhi* is Full Concentration, concentration that is firm, concentration at the level of absorption. The concentration of the beginning stages such as Counting and Connecting is not yet true *Samādhi*. It may be called Preparatory Concentration (*parikamma-samādhi*). It produces none of the effects implied in our definition of the word *samādhi*. Hence it is not included here as *Samādhi*, and we reckon only two kinds of *Samādhi*.

Comparing Neighbourhood Concentration and Full Concentration will help us understand them both better. Let us speak first about their effects. Neighbourhood Concentration is the state of being "in the immediate vicinity" (*upacāra-bhūmi*) of *Jhāna*,

approaching very close to *Jhāna* but still falling short of it; while Full Concentration is the state of having arrived, the actual attainment of *Jhāna*. On the analogy of going to a village, the first of these two states corresponds to reaching the boundary of the village, the second to reaching its centre. Both amount to reaching the village.

In terms of the progress of the practice, Neighbourhood Concentration is attained as soon as the Hindrances disappear. Freedom from Hindrances is the only condition. Full Concentration, on the other hand, is attained only with the full arising of the *Jhāna* Factors, in particular One-pointedness. Note that the falling away of the Hindrances and the appearance of the *Jhāna* Factors do not necessarily take place simultaneously. Another difference between these two forms of Concentration is that Neighbourhood Concentration is unsteady. It collapses and rises again like a child learning to walk, because the *Jhāna* Factors are sometimes present and sometimes not, arising and ceasing, arising and ceasing repeatedly. By contrast, in Full Concentration all the *Jhāna* Factors are present constantly, steadily, so that this form of concentra-

tion is stable, resembling the walking and standing of a grown-up person rather than the stumbling of the child learning to walk.

To explain more specifically: When *Ānāpānasati* has reached the stage of Neighbourhood Concentration, the mind has the Counterpart Sign as concentration object. The five *Jhāna* Factors are not yet fully established, arising and disappearing by turns. Hence concentration cannot be shifted from the Counterpart Sign to the *Jhāna* Factors. This is why the mind cannot as yet be raised to the level of the *Jhāna* Factors. It is not yet firm enough to attain Full Concentration, which comes only when attention is transferred from the Counterpart Sign to the five *Jhāna* Factors, making them clearly manifest as the object to be firmly concentrated on. When Full Concentration terminates in *Jhāna* in this way, the meditator is conscious of all five Factors at one time without any kind of thinking.

At this stage in the practice the important thing is to preserve the Sign carefully until the mind has successfully gathered together the *Jhāna* Factors. If the sign fades away, the mind will not be sufficiently

composed to develop and gather in the five Factors. In other words the mind can gather all the five *Jhāna* Factors only if the Sign is present, clear and firm. To put it yet another way: The meditator can concentrate the mind fully by gathering all the five *Jhāna* Factors while the mind is firmly fixed in Neighbourhood Concentration. Thus the Counterpart Sign is very important, and must be maintained and supported the entire time the mind is in Neighbourhood Concentration, no matter how many days, months, or years that may be. If the meditator wishes to attain *Jhāna*, he must preserve the Sign with unflagging effort until he achieves Full Absorption.

The meditator is advised to protect the Sign and keep it safe and sound at all times, just as a queen protects the embryo of the emperor-to-be that she carries. The Sign is the developing embryo; giving birth to the child, the attainment of *Jhāna*. If the queen is not careful the child may die in the womb so that she will have to wait for a new conception; the case where both mother and child die would correspond to giving up the practice of concentration altogether, in which case all is lost. The meditator must guard the Sign well as a foundation for gather-

ing in the *Jhāna* Factors until they are firmly established and appear clearly, giving rise to Full Concentration of Absorption. No part of the practice of concentration is taken more seriously than this.

The gathering in of the *Jhāna* Factors by way of the Counterpart Sign is the most delicate process in the whole practice of meditation, both tranquillity and insight. This technique is like delicate handicraft. It must be done neither too energetically nor too sluggishly, neither too tensely nor too loosely, neither too rapidly nor too slowly, with neither too much determination nor too little, with attention that is neither strained nor slack. Each of these things must be present to just the right extent. The process is largely automatic. It goes ahead readily of its own accord when the various necessary conditions come together in the proper way. If they do not come together in just the right way, the process will automatically stop and come to nothing.

The meditator must do two jobs at once: he must fix his mind on the Counterpart Sign and at the same. time gather in all five *Jhāna* Factors, maintaining them until they gradually grow distinct and firm.

Success in fixing the mind on the Sign can be achieved with the experience gained from guarding the sign and establishing it firmly in the mind. It will take weeks to make the Sign firm enough to serve as a basis for gathering in the *Jhāna* Factors completely and perfectly. Some people may have to practise for months, or years, or may — because of an unsuitable disposition, or for some other reason — fail altogether to reach Full Concentration. Such people must give up concentration and take up insight meditation instead, aiming at "Deliverance through Insight" (*paññā-vimutti*). People who have a disposition suitable for concentration practice may achieve success by first gathering in the *Jhāna* Factors and attaining *Jhāna* step by step, and then, practising insight meditation aided by their powerful concentration, attain "Deliverance of Mind" (*ceto-vimutti*). Anyone interested in this practice of Full Concentration must, therefore, have especially strong perseverance to guard the Sign without becoming discouraged so long as it has not yet given rise to Full Concentration. This is what is meant by guarding and supporting the Counterpart Sign during Neighbourhood Concentration until the attainment of Full Concentration.

To facilitate the attainment of Full Concentration the meditator guarding the newly arisen Sign is advised to create the most favourable physical conditions possible. For example, be should use foot-wear rather than going barefoot so that he need not waste time or be distracted by washing his feet. The annoyance occasioned by such acts may distract his mind and prevent his guarding the Sign and making it progressively finer. In some cases the use of a walking-stick is recommended so that standing is comfortable and walking easy and steady, conducive to guarding the Sign. The meditator should also carefully examine and adjust once more the seven Beneficial Things: dwelling, resort, speech, persons, food, climate, and posture (see p. 69), so that they are as favourable as possible to the guarding of the Sign.

Continuous guarding of the Sign may become boring and discouraging. To avoid boredom and develop zeal and satisfaction, the meditator should understand the sequence of phenomena leading to *Jhāna*. This sequence is as follows:

(1) The arising of the Counterpart Sign diminishes the Hindrances, but Full Concentration

is still unstable, arising and fading continually until such time as all five *Jhāna* Factors have been fully gathered in.

(2) Once the Hindrances have been diminished, the *Jhāna* Factors appear. The meditator has to develop them until all five are fully present. This he does using the Counterpart Sign as basis and the five arising Factors as objects.

(3) When all five Factors are Fully present, the level of concentration called the First *Jhāna* is attained.

This makes it clear that in this step of the practice the task is to guard the Sign and keep it firm and steady, and at the same time to gather in the five *Jhāna* Factors and so induce Full Concentration.

There exist techniques for speeding up the attainment of Full Concentration at the stage of guarding the Sign; they are called *Appanā-kosalla*, "Skill in inducing Full Concentration." Ten kinds of Skill have been recommended:

(1) Creating favourable physical conditions;
(2) harmonizing the five Mental Faculties;
(3) Skill regarding the Sign;
(4) exerting the mind when it needs to be exerted;
(5) subduing the mind when it needs to be subdued;
(6) encouraging the mind when it needs to be encouraged;
(7) controlling the mind when it needs to be controlled;
(8) avoiding unstable people and things;
(9) associating with stable people;
(10) bending the mind according to the situation.

These ten Skills are explained as follows:

(1) *Creating favourable physical conditions*: This means keeping the body in good order and making the things related to the body as favourable as possible. Hair, nails, teeth, and skin should be kept clean so that the meditator feels comfortable and experiences no annoyance from them. Long hair or a

heavy beard may cause itching; long nails become dirty and may be annoying, as may also unclean teeth and skin. It is desirable to make all these things neat and clean before beginning to concentrate the mind. Other things, such as clothing and lodging, should be suitably spruced up, made as neat and clean as possible. This is what is meant by creating favourable physical conditions. It is just a matter of common sense. The essence of this first Skill is that the meditator should have sufficient bodily comfort.

(2) *Harmonizing the five Mental Faculties* (*indriya*): The term *indriya* means a quality that is supreme in its particular function. From the point of view of mental development, the mental Faculties are five in number, namely: Confidence (*saddhā*), Effort (*viriya*), Mindfulness (*sati*), Concentration (*samādhi*), and Insight (*paññā*). As *Indriyas*, supreme things, these five not only signify faculties that are developed at this stage in the practice, but also imply personal virtues which a person may possess naturally as part of his mental make-up. They increase in the course of his studies, depending on what he has heard before undertaking the practice.

In combination they constitute the foundation of a person's current disposition. They are prime virtues of great importance on which the success or failure of mental training depends. They are akin to the six Character Types discussed in the beginning. Here it is intended that they should be adjusted and modified so as to benefit the practice. The five Faculties thus become important powers, conducive to success rather than obstacles, provided they are properly harmonized. Here, to harmonize means to balance and co-ordinate. The essence of co-ordinating the Faculties consists in harmonizing Confidence with Insight, Energy with Concentration, and Concentration with Insight. Mindfulness is to be applied in full measure regardless.

That confidence or faith is to be harmonized with insight means that faith must not outweigh understanding to the extent that it becomes blind belief, mere superstition, which is harmful. What is required in the practice is faith that is based on reason and stands the test of reason. The same applies to understanding. If not accompanied by confidence, it will be mere theorizing. The meditator must have confidence, for example, in the enlightenment of the

Buddha, as a support for his knowledge gained by listening and studying (*sutamaya-paññā*). He then investigates, examines, and contemplates until he has knowledge gained by thinking (*cintāmaya-paññā*). And lastly he has to put all this knowledge into practice so that he realizes the truth of it for himself. He then has knowledge gained by practice or mental development (*bhāvanāmaya-paññā*). Thus. there are three different levels of understanding, each of which must be accompanied by confidence or *saddhā* based on or supported by it. At the first level one hears and simply believes in what someone says and does. Then after having considered and understood, and having found the statement to be reasonable and in agreement with previous ideas, one has a higher degree of confidence. And finally, when one has actually practised and realized the fruits of the practice, one has confidence at the highest level, that is belief in a truth that has become evident to one's own mind, based on neither authority nor reasoning. This is what is meant by balancing faith and understanding (*saddhā* and *paññā*). The meditator must be aware of all this and see it in himself. He will then be able to co-ordinate belief and understanding, properly, keeping them suitably balanced and in

harmony. If he lets either one predominate, his practice will go amiss.

Balancing energy with concentration can easily be explained in terms of an analogy. Energy (*viriya*) *is* like speed, and concentration (*samādhi*) *like* the governer that regulates it. If the two are not co-ordinated, what is the result? Again, concentration is like the weight of a bullet, energy like the force of the gun-powder that propels it. If the two are not balanced, what is the result? If energy exceeds concentration, that excess energy is undirected and is dissipated. If concentration exceeds energy, then the meditator becomes lax and sluggish and may make no progress at all. So activating the mind and restraining it must go together; energy and concentration must be properly balanced.

Balancing concentration with understanding may take place by itself, naturally, if the meditator is habitually restrained in his mental activity. If he always makes his mind steady before thinking over any object, first concentrating on it and only then considering it, he will gain full understanding of that object according to reality. This is "investigation

with a steady mind" or "steadiness in investigation," call it what you will.

Mindfulness is needed in all cases. Mindfulness occupies a central position, as it were arranging the other four Faculties into pairs and "advising" them how to perform their respective duties properly and harmoniously from beginning to end. For example, Mindfulness enables Confidence to judge how much to believe; it introduces Confidence to the companionship of Understanding; it compels Confidence and Understanding to go together. The meditator needs Mindfulness as a means of controlling various other things, most particularly the other four faculties. With care he can co-ordinate them steadily and harmoniously.

With the Faculties working suitably together, the mind is steady; it has *Kammanīya-bhāva*, that is, agility and adaptability, and so can do progressively finer work. This is what is meant by Balancing the Faculties: the co-ordinating of all the qualities necessary for successful practice.

(3) *Skill regarding the Sign*: With all five Faculties balanced, Skill regarding the Sign comes easily.

A meditator possessing this Skill is able to observe mindfully the successive arising of various phenomena: he observes what arises and on what it depends; he knows what ought to be concentrated on and what ought not, what ought to be speeded up and what ought to be slowed down, so that all goes well and smoothly in the steps of (i) inducing the Sign, (ii) developing it, and (iii) protecting it for as long as desired.

At this stage of the practice the term "sign" refers to the single object on which the mind is focussed. This Sign implies one-pointedness, the fifth *Jhāna* Factor, and it is with regard to this Sign that the threefold Skill just mentioned has to be acquired. Whether the meditator succeeds fully in this will depend on how much skill he has already developed with the preceding Signs, Acquired and Counterpart. So, even at the stages of Acquired Sign and Counterpart Sign the meditator ought to be developing the Threefold Skill so as to become thoroughly familiar with it.

(i) *Skill in inducing the Sign*: This means skill in gathering the mind on the concentra-

tion object in the earlier steps of the practice and so directing the mind as to give rise to the Sign of the next higher step. As an *Appanā-kosalla*, Skill in inducing the Sign means skill in thoroughly stabilizing the mind on the Counterpart Sign until such time as the Hindrances have been caused to subside and all the five *Jhāna* Factors gathered in. Of the *Jhāna* Factors the most important at this stage is one-pointedness, because it becomes the new Sign, replacing the Counterpart Sign.

(ii) *Skill in developing the Sign*: This consists in progressively intensifying the Sign if it is indistinct; or in intensifying one of the five *Jhāna* Factors (*vitakka*, *Vicāra*, *pīti*, *sukha*, *ekaggatā*) that happens to be weak, indistinct, or fluctuating.

(iii) *Skill in protecting the Sign*: This consists in protecting every kind of Sign at all times, whether in the early stages when the Sign is developed for the first time, or in later stages, when it has already been fully established. The newly arisen Sign will soon fade away if not practised repeatedly just as does a recently

> acquired manual skill. Even after the Sign has been fully established disturbing factors may arise if it is not protected carefully just as a manual skill in which one has become perfect is lost completely if neglected for too long. So all stages of Acquired Sign and Counterpart Sign have to be protected. Only when the meditator has become perfectly skilled in *Jhāna* may he leave off protecting the Signs.

At the stage of *Appanā-kosalla* all the *Jhāna* Factors, especially the last, one-pointedness, must be developed in a way similar to but subtler than the above. In essence this means being always well-versed in the various kinds of Mastery (*vasī*, discussed later), and always arousing one's interest, in the practice by developing the bases of success (*iddhi-pāda*), already well known. To sum up, to have Skill regarding the Sign consists in knowing how to induce the Sign, how to intensify it, and how to maintain it for as long as required. To acquire this threefold Skill, the meditator has to exercise care; without mindfulness he will not achieve success; he will fall and scramble up again, over and over, until he finally abandons the practice in the belief that

his Faculties (*indriya*) are not strong enough. The main principle of Skill in inducing, Developing, and guarding the Sign consists in controlling instantly all fluctuating and unstable states of mind.

(4) *Exerting the mind when it should be exerted*: The word "when" is small but full of importance. The meditator must know just the right time to exert the mind. He must not exert the mind at a wrong time nor be even a moment late. He must be quick to observe and know what has arisen and what is to be done. And when a particular condition has arisen, he must know whether to exert the mind, or to subdue it, or to encourage it, and so on. In the case of *Appanā-kosalla*, exerting the mind means vitalizing it when it becomes slack and has not enough power to attain Full Concentration. To understand properly the technique of exerting the mind, it is necessary to study the Factors of Enlightenment.

The Factors of Enlightenment or *sambojjhaṅga* are seven in number. They are called Factors of Enlightenment because taken together they constitute the complete path to Enlightenment, the highest wisdom. These seven Factors are: Mindfulness

(*sati*), Investigation of *dhammas*, or mental states (*dhamma-vicaya*), Energy (*viriya*), Rapture or Joy (*pīti*), Tranquillity or Mental Calm (*passaddhi*), Concentration (*samādhi*), and Equanimity (*upekkhā*).

The six Factors of Enlightenment, apart from Mindfulness can be divided into two groups. The first three, Investigation of Mental States, Energy, and Joy, have the quality of vitalizing the mind and thereby uplifting it. The last three, Tranquillity, Concentration, and Equanimity, have the quality of subduing the agitated mind, of diminishing its surplus energy. As we are here concerned with the exerting of the mind, we shall discuss the three Factors of the first group. The meditator must develop these three Factors whenever the mind becomes slack, even at the very beginning of the practice. As always, Mindfulness must be applied throughout. The meditator must, for instance, be mindful from the very beginning in order to know: "Now the mind has become slack" to enquire "What Factors are to be applied to rid the mind of this slackness?" and "How can these factors be maintained?" and: finally to know when the mind has become free from its slackness. We

now discuss these three Factors of Enlightenment in turn:

(i) *Dhamma-vicaya* literally means the selection of mental states in the best possible way. The meditator has to be like a clever gardener who has the ability to select and pluck flowers in a garden so large and so full of flowers that the unskilled person would have no Idea which flowers to pluck. Only a clever person with an understanding of flowers can make the choice successfully and derive benefit from it. Selection implies examination. Unless one examines thoroughly, one cannot know how of what to select. So in practice *Dhamma-vicaya* consists in analysing states of mind in detail and selecting just what is needed in any particular circumstances. If the mind is slack, there may be several causes for this. It is necessary, therefore, to examine in order to find out the real cause and select a suitable cure for it. One kind of slackness may require that the meditator call on someone else's knowledge and insight; another kind he may have to examine and remedy by himself again and again until

he meets with success. In the Texts the following seven techniques of *Dhamma-vicaya* have been given for general use:

(a) *Asking questions*: If need be one should ask questions of a good friend as a means of weighing up one's own ideas.

(b) *Creating favourable physical condition*: (Already discussed under *Appanā-kosalla* (1)) Here this means, keeping body calm and mind clear.

(c) *Balancing the five Mental Faculties*: (*Appanā-kosalla* (2)) Balancing the Faculties, as well as being useful in speeding up the arising of Full Concentration, is also a means of inducing *Dhamma-vicaya*. It is used for this purpose if the direct speeding up of Full Concentration is not successful.

(d) *Completely avoiding ignorant and stupid people.*

(e) *Associating only with men of understanding*: Understanding here means understanding of the Teaching, especially its aspects.

(f) *Intelligent consideration of mental states* (*dhammas*), so as to understand them fully, or at least find the solution to some specific problem.

(g) Cultivating the habit of investigating and examining mental states as a long-term practice.

When these seven techniques are applied, the *Dhamma-vicaya-sambojjhaṅga* is firmly established. Slackness of mind will then be overcome and the meditator will have the inspiration to practise further.

(ii) *Energy* (*viriya-sambojhaṅga*): The word *viriya* means energy, effort; but here it includes the characteristics of steadiness and determination, by virtue of which the meditator advances in the practice without yielding. This mental energy and steadiness is also opposed to slackness of mind, but in a different way. If there is slackness, there is no energy, and *vice versa.* To overcome slackness the meditator must develop energy, arouse determination, by means of suitable reflection. The techniques commonly used and recommended are as follows:

(a) Reflect on the dangers of lacking energy, as a result of which one sinks back into the heap of suffering and is doomed to experience suffering over and over again, endlessly. This is called “seeing the danger of *saṃsāra*.”

(b) Reflect clearly, on the benefits of possessing energy: “When I have perfected it, I shall be free from suffering.” Reflecting in this way generates determination.

(c) Reflect on the Path shown by the Buddha, which one is practising: “This Path is the best; there is no other way — or if there is, it is no better than this.”

(d) Reflect on one’s indebtedness. A person practising Dhamma, especially a *bhikkhu*, has no way of earning a living by himself. He has to depend on others for the four requisites to life. Thus he is in debt; and he will clear his debt only when his practice is crowned with success. While he is reflecting in this way energy for the practice arises at once.

(e) Reflect on the Buddha as Teacher: “I have the best teacher in the world. I ought to have the highest regard for him and for the Dhamma taught by him, which is flawless and likewise the best. I must follow him earnestly.”

(f) Reflect on being heir to the Dhamma: “It is indeed a great piece of good fortune to be the heir of such an excellent teacher of Dhamma. Since no heritage is higher than this one, what else is there to aspire for?” Reflection along these lines is another way of making one value one’s practice highly.

(g) Practise Perception of Radiance or Light: This means making the mind clear and luminous as if there were bright sunshine — even if it is in fact a pitch-black night or if one has one’s eyes shut. To have previously developed the Light *Kasiṇa* may be of great help in this respect. Such practice is directly opposed to mental slackness; it prevents the mind from becoming lethargic and dull, and gives the meditator encouragement to practice.

(h) Avoid lazy people and anything conducive to laziness. Associate only with diligent people and with things conducive to diligence.

(k) Reflect constantly on all the various virtues of energy.

(1) Cultivate the habit of being energetic as a long-term practice.

When the meditator practises in this way, the Enlightenment Factor of Energy arises and becomes firmly established and slackness of mind is eradicated. Whereas Investigation of Mental States, (*dhamma-vicaya*) uplifts the mind so that it sees, full of hope, the way ahead, Energy exerts the mind to follow that way. This is how the functions of these two Enlightenment Factors are related.

(iii) *Joy* (*pīti-sambojjhaṅga*): As mentioned earlier, Joy means delight and enthusiasm arising out of one's own practice or out of respect for oneself for doing what ought to be done, realizing what ought to be realized. This serves as yet another stimulus, opposed to slackness and lethargy and directly reinforcing

energy. The means commonly used and recommended for inducing Joy are as follows:

(a) *Recollection of the Buddha.*

(b) *Recollection of the Dhamma.*

(c) *Recollection of the Sangha*: When this and the two preceding Recollections are practised sincerely, Joy arises with regard to the virtues of the Triple Gem and in its turn the power of this Joy reinforces the meditator's determination. But of course if he practises these Recollections only verbally, so that the virtues of Buddha, Dhamma, and Sangha do not truly permeate his whole being, none of these beneficial results appear.

(d) *Recollection of Morality*: Reflecting on morality, in particular on one's own moral purity, brings a strong feeling of self-respect and inspiration. It brings inner Joy, which further reinforces determination.

(e) *Recollection of Liberality*: Recollection of liberality, especially of one's own acts of generosity, gives rise to feelings of self-

respect and Joy, just as does Recollection of Morality.

(f) *Recollection of "Radiant Beings"*: This means recollecting the virtues that lead to the state of a "Radiant Being." Prominent among these virtues are conscience and abhorrence of evil, which make a person happy and lustrous, a "Radiant Being." Reflecting on the effects of such qualities fills the mind with joy in the Dhamma, which in its turn reinforces mental energy.

(g) *Recollection of Peace*: Here the meditator reflects on the quality of peace, on the mental states conducive to peace, and finally on the value of the highest Peace, Nirvāṇa, so that he comes to see clearly how it can be attained. This brings Joy, resulting in great encouragement and determination. It has the same beneficial effects as Recollection of the Buddha and so on.

(h) *Cultivating Joy as a habit*: Making it a long-term practice to become familiar with the quality of Joy means being at all times

> cheerful, buoyant, determined, persevering, full of confidence, and hope. Once this habit has been successfully developed, the Factor of Enlightenment called Joy is firmly established, and in time eliminates all slackness of mind.

To sum up, Investigation of Mental States arouses the mind by enabling it to see the way leading to success, and thereby greatly encouraging it; Energy activates the mind, giving it the strength to progress along that way; and Joy reinforces Energy, ensuring that it is maintained continuously, without interruption. By co-ordinating these three Factors of Enlightenment, the meditator can readily exert and stimulate his mind to the extent required, and finally, at the stage of *appanā*, attain absolute one-pointedness.

(5) *Subduing the mind when it needs to be subdued*: Generally the "normal" mind is so restless that its restlessness manifests physically — body and mind being inter-dependent.

Calming this restlessness of both body and mind is the duty of the remaining three Factors of Enlight-

enment, namely: Tranquillity (*passaddhi*), Concentration (*samādhi*), and Equanimity (*upekkhā*). All these three have the function of pacifying the mind, fixing it firmly, and making it resolute and calm. They are all interrelated closely, each one affecting and being affected by the others. Still they can of course be considered individually and developed separately.

(i) *Tranquillity*: Tranquillity means quietness, stillness, a state produced by the gradual pacification of restlessness and agitation. Just as restlessness is both physical and mental, so also there are two kinds of tranquillity, bodily and mental. 'The following are the methods recommended for developing Tranquillity:

(a) *Producing* (*bhāvanā*),

(b) *Increasing* (*bahulīkatā*),

(c) *Investigating skillfully and appropriately* (*yoniso-manasikāra*). All three of these lead to tranquillity of both body and mind. *Bhāvanā* means causing something to arise, *bahulīkatā* means increasing it by repetition, and *yoniso-manasikāra* means

taking it to heart and reflecting on it wisely until one has come to understand rightly and perceive clearly all the phenomena involved in each and every step of what has been practised. These three processes are interrelated at every stage of the progress thus: First the meditator makes an effort to observe restlessness and its cause, and practises the technique for producing calm; and whatever degree of calm has been so produced he then carefully maintains by repeated practice.

(d) *Natural environment*: Heat or cold, open or cramped space, beauty or unsightliness of scenery all affect the tranquillity of the mind. Surroundings that are noisy or unsightly or offensive to the nose are harmful to tranquillity of mind and should be avoided.

(e) *Food*: The meditator should take only food: that is conducive to bodily and mental tranquillity, such as vegetables, which have a greater calming effect than

meat, fish, and so on. He should also eat in a manner conducive to tranquillity.

(f) *Posture*: Postures conducive to tranquillity are ones that tend to counteract restlessness and agitation. The prone position conduces to restlessness, while walking does just the opposite. The meditator must observe and discover which postures are beneficial in his own particular case.

(g) *Suitable application of effort*: The meditator should not make any effort, physical or mental, that is beyond his capabilities or inappropriate to time and place. The principle here is to be neither too tense nor too lax. Here, as above, just what is suitable depends on individual characteristics.

(h) *Avoiding restless people.*

(j) *Associating with people who possess tranquillity of mind.*

(k) *Making tranquillity a habit.*

Practising all these ten techniques, the meditator gains tranquillity of body and mind in a gradual,

orderly fashion. The important point is always to be very careful, resolute, and persevering. The whole thing must be done very delicately and at the same time with great patience.

(ii) *Concentration* (*samādhi-sambojjhaṅga*): Concentration as a specific Enlightenment Factor consists in skill in inducing the state of Full Concentration. It is not just general concentration, which is what the meditator has been practising all along. In fact, at the present stage of the practice concentration has become "stuck"; the *samādhi-sambojjhaṅga* has to be used as an instrument to remove the obstruction as well as any future ones, to push the practice further. Still, this specific Factor, concentration, is so closely connected with general concentration that the two cannot be separated and must be practised simultaneously. For example, the mental image that has appeared still has to be protected in the ways already explained. Despite this it is classed as a separate and distinct Factor of Enlightenment so that it can be dealt with in detail. The things to be practised in this case are as mentioned before:

(a) *Producing,*

(b) *Increasing by repetition,*

(c) *Skilful Investigation.* All these three are involved in the Sign of either tranquillity meditation, or insight meditation as the case may be. The essential point is to induce concentration carefully, maintaining it by practice and wise reflection as discussed under "Tranquillity." In addition, the teachers of old have recommended the following:

(d) *Developing the ten kinds of Skill* (*appanā-kosalla*) as for Full Concentration, and

(e) *Making concentration a habit.* Concentration must become an integral part of the meditator's make-up, so that he is always in the mood for practice.

(iii) *Equanimity* (*upekkhā—sambojjhaṅga*): Here equanimity means even-mindedness based on the clear insight that "Nothing whatsoever is worth being attached to." (*Sabbe dhamma nālaṃ abhinivesāya*) This is Right Understanding, the very basis of the practice of Dhamma. It is the instrument by which Equanimity may

be maintained towards all things and events, and is itself a direct supporter of *samādhi*. To develop Equanimity the following techniques are recommended:

(a) *Equanimity towards all living beings*: Cultivate even-mindedness towards all living creatures, men and animals.

(b) *Equanimity towards all conditioned things* (*saṅkhāra*): *Saṅkhāra* here means all non-living things. Together. (a) and, (b) cover all the things we tend to become attached to and involved in. First we think: "What is this?" "Whose is this?" and then: "This is better," "That is worse," and so on. These feelings lead to attachment and culminate in clinging based on the ideas of "me" and "mine." And such attachments and involvements give rise to endless problems and difficulties.

(c) *Avoid people who have or represent strong attachment.*

(d) *Associate only with people who are detached* and who represent detachment, especially ones free of *all* attachment.

(e) *Form the habit of being naturally detached.* This can be done by reflecting on the virtues of a life of detachment, being completely satisfied with detachment, extolling its merits, and constantly urging and encouraging others to do the same. These are the important hints for forming this habit.

Now to sum up the inter-relationships of the above three Factors of Enlightenment: Tranquillity produces calm of body and mind; when body and mind are calm there is Concentration; and when there is evenmindedness with regard to that state of concentration, that is Equanimity. This is how these three Factors of Enlightenment are to be integrated. Once this integration has been effectively achieved the mind cannot possibly wander or become agitated; by the power of Tranquillity the formerly restless mind is pacified. Practising this, each time the mind becomes restless, is what is meant by "Subduing the mind when it needs to be subdued."

(6) *Encouraging the mind when it needs to be encouraged*: When the mind needs neither to be stimulated nor to be subdued, the meditator is ad-

vised to encourage it, that is, to uplift it towards whichever quality is most appropriate at that time. There are two aspects to this: "threatening" the mind so that it really dreads unwholesome, dangerous things; and inspiring it to be interested in wholesome things.

The things that the mind ought to dread include the various types of suffering, which must be clearly understood. In the Texts eight of these are listed. They are: the suffering inherent in

(i) birth,

(ii) aging,

(iii) illness,

(iv) death,

(v) the four kinds of Downfall (*apāya*),

(vi) past involvement in *saṃsāra*, the "cycle of becoming,"

(vii) involvement in *saṃsāra* in the future, which is clearly foreseen, and

(viii) the struggle for the necessities of life.

Included in the last of these is the search for "food," for eyes, ears, nose, tongue, and body, which goes on and on without end and in which every individual is involved continuously, no matter what he is or has. Constant reflection and clear awareness of these eight types of suffering is the means of frightening the mind into a dread of immersion in this unceasing struggle. It will arouse confidence, determination, and satisfaction in the meditator's efforts to be free from these conditions.

Interesting the mind in higher things may be achieved by inspiring it to rejoice in the virtues of people and ideals, in particular the virtues of Buddha Dhamma, and Sangha. But it must be *genuine* inspiration: "Here is a man (the Buddha) completely free from suffering; this is truly the Path (the Dhamma) leading to freedom from suffering; these are exemplary people (the Sangha) who have attained to freedom from suffering." Each of the Three Gems ensures success in the practice.

The practice of threatening and inspiring the mind, if carried out correctly, serves to coax the mind along if it happens to have lapsed into a state of stagnation.

(7) *Watching over the mind when it needs to be watched over*: When the mind is neither slack nor restless, but working smoothly, it is said to have attained a suitable Preparatory Stability. What the meditator must then do is watch over and maintain this state until he has achieved the desired goal, which here means Full Concentration. The important point is that should maintain this favourable state by watching over it, calmly and uniformly. The meditator has to collect the mind and gather in the *Jhāna* Factors smoothly and continuously. This is what is to be understood by "watching over the mind."

This practice is explained by the analogy of the skillful charioteer. Having his horse under control, the charioteer can regulate its speed. On a smooth road he can make the horse pull the chariot along steadily by merely sitting still, whip in hand, and keeping good watch; in this way he reaches his destination without incident. Likewise the meditator, by merely watching over and maintaining the mind's stability, successfully gathers the *Jhāna* Factors. The course of tranquillity which has reached this stage of Full Concentration, follows certain laws. Once this point

has been reached and these natural laws come into effect, the whole process becomes self-sustaining.

The secret in controlling the mind lies in not interfering; to interfere is to create problems where none existed. Most important and desirable in the present situation is adequate mindfulness and clear comprehension. (*sati-sampajañña*). In the task of watching over the mind and maintaining its stability, mindfulness (*sati-sambojjhaṅga*) is highly desirable.

(8) *Avoiding unstable people*: Three types of person come under this heading:

> (i) The person unfamiliar with, or opposed to renunciation: Renunciation here means the mental state free from sensuality. A person unfamiliar with renunciation is one whose mind has never been free from sensuality, never free from sensual desires and indulgence in sensual objects. In other words, he is a person who has never had peace from the disturbing demands of sensuality, and so does not know the taste of renunciation. A person opposed to renunciation is one who knowingly allows himself to be

absorbed in sensuality. If anyone speaks of a state opposite to his he doesn't like it, even though he has never had any experience of it; he just assumes it to be something undesirable. Such a person is unstable and without peace of mind; he intentionally avoids and habitually veers away from the life of peace.

(ii) *The busy person and the irresolute person*: The person who has may things to do can never devote himself to any one of those things; as a result he never succeeds in carrying any single thing through to completion. This is the "Jack of all trades, master of none." That he likes to busy himself with so many things shows that he is of unstable mind. The irresolute person is quick to change his ideas and interests. Before he can carry any single thing through to completion he changes his mind and switches to something else. He will never succeed in anything; he is the "rolling stone that gathers no moss."

(iii) *The person with agitated, wandering mind*: This is the person with no definite objectives or goals. His mind lacks discipline.

These three types of people are unstable and undependable. The meditator is advised to shun them while practising. He should regard them as germs, carriers of a disease which may prove highly contagious. Anyone who aims at attaining Full Concentration should always keep well away from such types. To practise in this way will at least keep the meditator on the path to Full Concentration.

(9) *Associating with people of stable mind*: This is merely the opposite of (8), so need not be discussed at length. Essentially what the meditator has to do is try to adopt the good habits of such people and make them his own. That such a process is possible is well known. Another benefit of associating with people of stable mind is the opportunity of enquiring about matters relevant to the practice of Full Concentration.

(10) *Adapting the mind to the situation*: This means manoeuvring the mind in accordance with its various states and activities while firmly concentrated, taking into account both timing and intensity. All this is not easy to deal with in detail. What it amounts to is that the meditator must be sufficiently adaptable to

adjust his mind appropriately to whatever situation arises on the way to Full Concentration.

Here the expression "adjust appropriately" may be clarified with the help of an analogy. For a person just learning to ride a bicycle it is important to keep the body in the proper position. To maintain his balance the cyclist must shift his weight at just the right moments. If he fails to do so he will not be able to cycle smoothly. If he does not manoeuvre the handle-bars as required or if he fails to distribute his weight properly he will wobble all over the place. He must adjust his centre of gravity continually. Likewise the mind must be steered, balanced, and steadied if Full Concentration is to be achieved.

Right timing and the maintaining of the happy medium between too early and too late is illustrated by the analogy of the bee. Every morning the bee flies out in search of nectar. If it arrives at the flowers too early it is still dark and the flowers have not yet opened. Also there are many kinds of danger it may run into. If it arrives there too late it will get nothing, since the other bees will have already collected the lot.

The happy medium between too strong and too gentle is illustrated by the following analogy. There used to be a game in which a letter or symbol had to be drawn with a knife blade on the petal of a lotus floating in a pond without piercing the petal. A skilful man could, as if by magic, draw the letter with a single movement of the knife without piercing the petal at all. In this game, if the stroke was too gentle, no mark would appear, and if too strong the petal would be cut. The cut had to be just right: not too strong and not too gentle; only then would the feat be accomplished.

As for maintaining the mean between too slow and too fast, consider the analogy of the man ordered to collect a thirty or forty foot long strand of a certain thick and sticky kind of spider web. If he works too quickly the strand is sure to break, and if he is too slow it will not come loose from the cobweb.

To illustrate the mean between too much and too little there is the analogy of the man in a yacht. The yachtsman must let put just the right amount of sail depending on the wind. If the wind is strong and he lets out too much sail his boat will capsize; and if

the wind is only gentle and he lets out too little sail, the boat will not move at all.

For the mean between too daring and too timid there is the analogy of pouring oil from a large vessel into a bottle with a very narrow neck. If one is too daring the oil will spill everywhere and if one is too timid in tipping the vessel of oil nothing will come out at all.

For the mean between too tense and too relaxed there is the analogy of holding a small sparrow in the hand. If one is too tense and clenches the fist too tightly, the bird will be crushed to death, and if one is too relaxed and holds the fist too loosely the bird will escape. Or, consider the analogy of flying a kite or tuning a musical instrument. Think of how the string of a lute is kept properly adjusted.

All these analogies clearly illustrate how to "adapt the mind to the situation."

In the early stages of the practice leading to Full Concentration it is necessary to incline the mind towards the *Jhāna* Factors, gradually gathering them in by keeping to the middle, the golden mean between

the different pairs of extremes. When everything is done well along these lines it becomes possible for the mind to incline towards and reach Full Concentration. For anyone whose temperament is naturally suited to such practice success will come easily and rapidly. But for someone lacking in will-power and determination many difficulties will arise. Such a person must make a great effort for a long time. It may even take him his entire lifetime to attain to this delicate stage of the practice. A really determined meditator will not even worry about life or death, solely concentrating on the goal of his practice.

These ten Skilful Means are collectively called *Appanā-kosalla*. All ten have the same objective; they are all means of speeding the mind along the way to *appanā* or Full Concentration. To practise them is to cultivate and consolidate good mental habits and faculties. And *Appanā-kosalla* leads not only to successful tranquillity meditation; it benefits the entire Dhamma practice, even in its final stage of insight meditation. If *Appanā-kosalla* is performed well at the stage of Guarding the Sign and Gathering in the *Jhāna* Factors, the result will be Full Concentration and the attainment of Absorption.

Chapter IX

Attainment Of Absorption

To understand the steps of the practice during the attainment of *Jhāna* we must go back to the point at which the Counterpart Sign appears. Just before the appearance of the Counterpart Sign (*paṭibhāga-nimitta*) the Acquired Image (*Uggaha-nimitta*) becomes very clear; the mind becomes very calm and the meditator feels contentment and satisfaction in the practice; concentration comes so easily that it is hardly necessary to make any effort at all. These are all indications that the Counterpart Sign is about to appear.

Once the Counterpart Sign has appeared it must be guarded for as long as necessary in the manner explained earlier. Even though there are at this stage no Hindrances, the Full Concentration or *Appanā* still collapses again and again. This is because the

Factors of *Jhāna* are not as yet firmly and completely established. The meditator must keep his mind well-balanced using the ten Skilful Means for attaining *Jhāna* in order to arrive as rapidly as possible at Full Concentration. He can draw his mind together and reach Full Concentration by gradually gathering in the five *Jhāna* Factors, making them well-defined and establishing them firmly. When the five *Jhāna* Factors are firmly established the meditator is said to have attained Full Concentration (*appanā-samādhi*) or the First Absorption (*paṭhama-jhāna*).

In the state of absorption the mind is endowed with ten Characteristics over and above the five *Jhāna* Factors and the five Mental Faculties, all of which are completely manifest. Thus there are altogether twenty criteria for the attainment of *Jhāna*. The ten Characteristics are divided into three groups according as they are associated with the beginning, middle, or end of the *Jhāna*.

(A) *The beginning phase of Jhāna*, which is also known as the Perfection of the Practice, has three Characteristics:

(1) The mind is free of all the faults opposed to the attaining of the First Absorption.

(2) The mind thus free acquires the Sign of Tranquillity Meditation (*samatha-nimitta*), in this case the *Jhāna* Factors.

(3) The mind, having acquired the Sign of Tranquillity Meditation, becomes absorbed in it.

It is on account of these three Characteristics of the beginning phase that the First *Jhāna* is described as "glorious in its beginning."

(B) *The middle phase of Jhāna*, which is known as the Increase of Equanimity (*upekkhā-bruhanā*) has three Characteristics:

(1) Watching with equanimity the mind which is free from all faults detrimental to *Jhāna*. (cf. A1)

(2) Watching with equanimity the mind which is absorbed in the Sign of Tranquillity Meditation. (cf. A3)

(3) Watching with equanimity the mind endowed with Unique Excellence (*ekattā*). Here

Unique Excellence refers to the state of complete Absorption possessed of various qualities, each Opposed to a particular Hindrance.

It is because of these three Characteristics in its middle phase that the First *Jhāna is* described as "glorious in its progress."

(C) *The final phase of Jhāna*, known as Rejoicing (*sampahaṃsanā*), has four Characteristics:

(1) Rejoicing because all the qualities of the First Absorption, in particular the five *Jhāna* Factors, have arisen completely; this is called Integration of the *Jhāna* Factors.

(2) Rejoicing because all the Mental Faculties have been integrated and are working together to the same end:

(3) Rejoicing at the mind's ability to make the sustained effort necessary to attain the *Jhāna* in question, in this case the First, and at its ability to realize the integration of the Mental Faculties.

(4) Rejoicing because the mind takes such a delight in the experience of *Jhāna* that it willingly submerges itself in it.

Because of these four kinds of rejoicing in its final stage, the First *Jhāna* is described as "glorious in its consummation."

These three groups taken together comprise the ten Characteristics of the beginning, middle, and final phases of *Jhāna*. They constitute the "glory" of *Jhāna*, something worthy of being achieved and revered, highly gratifying to any discerning person interested in training and developing the mind. We shall now discuss the manner in which these ten, together with the five *Jhāna* Factors and the five Mental Faculties, combine in the First *Jhāna*.

The dividing of the ten Characteristics just discussed into three groups is purely a matter of convenience. In practice they are all present at the same time. The one single state of *Jhāna*, has different characteristics depending on the angle from which we view it and the mode classification we choose to adopt— which is once again just a matter of convenience. Now we discuss the ten Characteristics one by one.

(1) With the arising of the First *Jhāna* the mind is freed from all factors detrimental to absorption and becomes truly one-pointed. At the time of the Counterpart Sign (*paṭibhāga-nimitta*) this Characteristic is not as yet perfected; it is perfected only with the appearance of the Sign of Tranquillity Meditation (*samatha-nimitta*), that is, the five *Jhāna* Factors. Note that the removal of the Hindrances by the power of the Counterpart Sign is not as yet Full Concentration (*appanā-samādhi*), but merely Neighbourhood Concentration (*upacāra-samādhi*). It is not correct to say that *Jhāna is* attained as soon as the five Hindrances are removed. Such a loose mode of speaking should be avoided except in the most superficial and general discussion. What this Characteristic means precisely is that the mind is completely freed from all faults opposed to the state of Absorption.

(2) The second Characteristic is that the mind, being now completely free from all the faults detrimental to *Jhāna*, is able to relinquish the Counterpart Sign and take the Factors of *Jhāna as* its Sign. Unless the mind is free of these faults (by virtue of the first Characteristic) it cannot make the transfer

to the new Sign. While the Counterpart Sign is present the mind is not free of faults. It is still fixed on an external phenomenon, which is not a firm basis for one-pointedness; it is still unsteady because it is not endowed with the *Jhāna* Factors, which are the only perfect foundation for one-pointedness. Thus the hindrances may still return and disturb the mind. The process of drawing the mind together so that it can attain *Jhāna* must be done at a time when no Hindrances are present to interfere. Only under such condition can awareness be transferred from the Counterpart Sign to the Sign of Tranquillity Meditation.

(3) Third Characteristic: The mind, having acquired the Sign of Tranquillity Meditation, is thoroughly absorbed in it. At this stage the mind is devoid of any trace of the Counterpart Sign; it is submerged in awareness of the five *Jhāna* Factors — not merely aware of them but thoroughly permeated by them.

The purpose of regarding these three Characteristics as belonging to the beginning phase of *Jhāna* is to show them up as manifestations to be noted and

understood before all others: because from this point on, whatever state the mind is in, the meditator must observe just what it is doing and how it is functioning.

(4) Fourth Characteristic: The mind knows clearly in itself that it is free of all disturbing factors. This condition can be compared to that of a man who has just had a bath. Having washed himself thoroughly; he knows without having to look that his body is quite free from dirt. Likewise, when the mind is intently focussed on the five *Jhāna* Factors it simultaneously knows that it is purified. The more the mind is focussed on these five Factors, the more it is aware of its own purity. To sum up, the mind steadily perceives its own freedom from defiling factors as well as being aware of all other conditions prevailing at the time. This process is the same as that of looking at something while walking. At one and the same moment one is aware of walking, looking at the object, seeing it, and reacting to it. What is more, all this happens automatically.

(5) The mind clearly knows the reason why it is absorbed in the Tranquillity Sign, that is, the five

Jhāna Factors. The reason is that it is free of all impure states. To make this clearer: firstly the mind is aware that it is in this state, and secondly it sees the causes and conditions that enable it to be in this state. It clearly knows both these facts simultaneously, and then further perceives another state, as follows:

(6) The mind sees clearly its own Unique Excellence — this because of its ability to do two jobs at once.

Obviously, then, the three Characteristics of "seeing clearly" in the middle phase of *Jhāna* (4, 5, and 6) are closely interrelated. The full meaning of this is brought out in the following analogy: Because a certain man is pure others honour him and; welcome him into their homes. The man can see at one and the same time all three things: his purity, his entering the home, and the honour he is accorded. The three things can be truly seen only in relation to himself, though they can also be looked at in isolation. In the same way the mind focussed on the three Characteristics sees itself clearly and steadily through the power of "seeing clearly,"

through the power of satisfaction, and through the power of the happy conviction that nothing in the world can shake its present firmness. This is why this state of mind is called *Appanā-samādhi*.

The three Characteristics of the middle phase of *Jhāna* are attributes of a mind that has already attained *Jhāna*. The remaining four Characteristics are the benefits gained by the mind, the "pleasant tastes" (*rasa*) of *Jhāna*. They are the four kinds of "Rejoicing," namely:

(7) Rejoicing because all the phenomena involved at the time of *Jhāna* are not merely present but are harmoniously integrated in the performance of their respective functions. The phenomena in question are the five *Jhāna* Factors, the five Mental Faculties, and certain others.

How the Mental Faculties are to be adjusted so that they are not in disharmony has been explained above (for instance, under *Appanā-kosalla* (2)). Here we merely point out that all five Faculties fulfil their functions collectively and perfectly. No Factor dominates or hampers the others; and of the five *Jhāna*

Factors, each is present at this stage at just the right intensity, so that all are firmly established. In earlier stages, especially in the beginning steps of Counting and Connecting, Applied Thought (*vitakka*) and Sustained Thought (*vicāra*) are present to some extent, but never in the right proportion; while Rapture (*pīti*), Happiness (*sukha*), and one-pointedness (*ekaggatā*) are completely absent. Later, in the steps of Contact and Fixing Rapture and Happiness are present, but are still unsteady and weak; and One-pointedness is not present to such a degree as to justify calling it *ekaggatā*. In the present situation, however, all these Factors are developed in full and in just the right proportions, as if they had been precisely weighed and measured out by a discriminating man. They are therefore like five—or ten—sticks, firmly fixed in the ground and joined together at the top so that they support one another mutually. Each one bears an equal share of the weight and has an equal opportunity to perform its particular function. So to have the five *Jhāna* Factors present in the mind in the way that constitutes *Appanā* is not difficult.

(8) Rejoicing because all the five Mental Faculties have been combined to do the same job, thereby

enabling the mind to partake of the same "pleasant taste of *Jhāna*." When the five Faculties, Faith, Energy, Mindfulness, Concentration, and Insight, combine and work together in order to partake of the same pleasant taste success is achieved and mental rejoicing naturally ensues.

(9) Rejoicing because the mind is able to bring together at will all the Mental Powers and apply them in the intended manner; or, to put it figuratively, rejoicing "because one is able to lead the whole crowd in whichever direction one wishes." The mind rejoices because it is in control of all the Mental Powers, not letting any one of them increase or decrease, and because it is able to integrate all the Mental Faculties to the same end — primarily to partake of the same pleasant taste. When in this condition the mind rejoices automatically.

(10) Rejoicing because the mind finds contentment in the pleasant taste of *Jhāna* and naturally prefers it to anything else. This is due to the powers of Rapture and Happiness, which attract the mind, and the powers of *Vitakka*, *Vicāra*, and *Upekkhā*, which have made the mind firm. Absorption is, as it

were, the mind's "Nirvāṇa," a state in which the mind takes such a delight that it does not want to leave it. To summarize: rejoicing arises because of satisfaction in the taste of *Jhāna*.

This fourfold rejoicing takes place automatically, and so is in no way an obstacle to *Jhāna*. Rejoicing goes together with the *Jhāna* Factors; or, more precisely, it is itself a kind of *Jhāna* factor. It may be regarded as a form of Rapture and Happiness. We have isolated it here as "Rejoicing" in order to examine separately, it, and its causes, both of which underlie the complexity of all the *Jhāna* Factors.

Our intention here is not to examine trifling details at great length; but rather to attempt an examination of the facts of *Jhāna*, and to clear away certain obstacles that may appear during this stage of the practice.

These ten Characteristics are basic elements; they are the basis for examining every stage of the practice from this point on, including the remaining three Material Absorptions, the four "Formless"

Absorptions, and the entire practice of insight meditation up to the “Noble Paths and Fruits.” They are a device which can be used for examining every step of the entire practice of meditation. As each stage is attained by following the same pattern of practice, the one method of examination is applicable for all of them, any differences being only differences in name. It is, then, well worth our while to pay special attention to these ten Characteristics. Unless the meditator is able to understand and know these Characteristics by direct experience he will have great difficulty following this course of practice, “Deliverance by way of Mind” (*ceto-vimutti*), and will have to resort to the method of “Deliverance by way of Insight” (*paññā-vimutti*), which is the direct and natural method. This is the significance of these ten Characteristics.

Calling the ten “glorious in their beginning, glorious in their progress, and glorious in their consummation” has the side-effect of encouraging people to embark on the practice. It is, to use the modern term, an advertisement, a device to encourage people to take an interest in meditation in the first place and then actually to practise it.

Having pointed out the relationships existing between each Characteristic and the others of its same group, we now go on to examine the relationships of the three groups themselves to one another. These relationships are best understood by considering the state of the mind during *Jhāna*, especially as regards the object and the way the mind is fixed on it. Several of the terms used before will be used here in a somewhat different sense and some of the mind's activities become difficult to understand and obscure — as it were, "secret." Accordingly we must consider once the meanings of these terms and the manner in which these mental activities take place.

As is well known the mind must have an object of one kind or another. This being so, the question is: what is the object of the mind during *Jhāna*? To simplify matters we shall recognize two stages: that of entering *Jhāna* and that of being firmly established in *Jhāna*. The mind, when on the verge of entering *Jhāna*, is said to be "mature" (*gotrabhū-citta*). Its object is *Appanā*, the state of *Jhāna* that it is about to enter. The mind, when already established in *Jhāna*, cannot be said to have an object in the usual sense; however the *Jhāna* Factors, which

are present clearly and in full measure, can be regarded as the mind's object at this time — this because the mind is aware of their presence. In practice, of course, this distinction between entering *Jhāna* and having entered it is not important, since the two stages follow each other automatically. What is important is the question: what is the object of the mind at the moment of entering *Jhāna*, and just how is the mind involved in that object?

As has been explained previously, at the moment when the mind is about to enter *Jhāna* it is engaged in moving towards *Appanā* or Full Concentration, so that Appanā itself is then the object. This means that the mind, at that time, no longer has as its object any of the three Signs, Preparatory, Acquired, or Counterpart. This is an important point: none of the three *nimittas* (among which the breath is included) serves as an object of the one-pointed mind, or even of the mind which is about to become one-pointed. All three are, however, manifest owing to the power of Mindfulness; the mind is not distracted; Energy is present, and the meditator accomplishes the task of entering *Jhāna*. This point must be understood well, for it may be regarded as "the secret of the attainment of *Jhāna*."

The meditator should take note of the essential points of the above matter. Firstly, though none of the three Signs, the breathing included, is the object of the mind during this step, they are nevertheless still manifest. Secondly, though the mind does not have any of these Signs as object, it is not distracted; there is application of energy and the practice goes ahead smoothly until at last the mind is fully concentrated. It may be wondered how all this is possible. The question may arise: If none of the Signs, the breathing included, is the object of the mind, how can they be apparent to it? Or: How can an effort be made to develop the mind and how can the practice go smoothly when the mind is calm, motionless, and unwavering? This is why the word "secret" was used. But in fact there is no secret, no trick. It is just that this aspect of the meditation is particularly subtle. In practice it all goes ahead naturally and in accordance with natural laws. To anyone who has not observed this process closely or has not studied it sufficiently all this may well seem impossible.

When some point cannot be explained directly and easily in words, an analogy may well clarify it. Here

we resort to the well-known old analogy of the saw. Imagine a carpenter engaged in sawing wood. The saw is cutting the wood but the man is not paying any particular attention to the exact point of contact between saw and wood. He is nevertheless clearly aware of himself sawing wood simply because his action of sawing is taking place. We note the following points:

(1) The carpenter is aware of sawing even though he is not paying particular attention to the spot where the teeth of the saw are actually cutting the wood.

(2) Though the teeth of the saw move back and forth in response to the carpenter's pulling and pushing, still there is unity or "one-pointedness" in the action of sawing. Thus one pointedness and motion back and forth can be present at one and the same time.

(3) The activity of the carpenter goes on without his paying attention to the exact spot where the saw is cutting the wood or to the effort he is making. Even mindfulness is not very

actively involved in controlling the effort. Nevertheless, be it noted, effort is being made, precisely as demanded by the task.

(4) Lastly we note that even if the carpenter were to shut his eyes the wood would continue to be cut and finally would be sawn right through.

So the task gets done without the carpenter's paying particular attention to the teeth of the saw, to the action of sawing, to his own effort, or to anything else. There is only mindfulness, watching over the various aspects of the sawing to the extent necessary. These various things being properly co-ordinated, the task is completed successfully.

Each of these four points has its counterpart in the condition of the mind approaching Absorption. The wood corresponds to the Sign, the Point of Contact (*phusanā*) and the teeth of the saw to the air moving in and out past the Sign. The carpenter seeing the teeth of the saw indirectly is the meditator who no longer fixes his mind on breath or image, but yet remains mindful of them, mindful in an extremely

subtle way. The carpenter's lack of attention to the back-and-forth movement of the saw is the meditator's lack of interest in the breathing and the Counterpart Image, both of which are, nevertheless still present. The meditator is simply mindful, thus maintaining the necessary effort to gather in the Factors of *Jhāna* or *Appanā* in that seemingly mysterious way without any conscious intention. The carpenter is not concerned how deep the saw has cut into the wood; his effort is there and the saw just keeps on cutting. Likewise the meditator, not caring about image or breathing, makes no conscious effort whatsoever, and yet his effort continues and the task of attaining *Jhāna* progresses smoothly by itself.

All this makes clear the significance of the point that neither image nor breath is object of the mind and yet both are manifest. Once this point has been understood correctly it is not hard to understand also how it is that the mind at this stage is not concerned with the Counterpart Image or the breath; that it is not fixed on any of the three Signs at all; and that mindfulness operates by itself, watching over the various things concerned with Neighbour-

hood Concentration (*upacāra-samādhi*), making sure they function correctly until Full Concentration or *Jhāna* is attained. To put it another way: mindfulness watches over the different elements so that they are well adjusted, merely "standing guard" while the different mental activities go ahead automatically. The mental activity concerned here is the process of gathering in the *Jhāna* Factors. No factor becomes excessively strong, oppressing or dominating the others; the mind is now well trained and well adjusted, and all the various factors are in perfect harmony. It is for this reason that Mindfulness was compared to a charioteer who simply holds the reins while the chariot goes along smoothly until the destination is reached.

The point to note is this: Right from the very beginning the object of concentration has been the breathing or one of the other Signs. At this point the situation changes. The mind is no longer fixed on any of the Signs, yet the result is the same as if it were so fixed. Mindfulness is able to maintain the various conditions leading to Tranquillity. Full awareness of the signs is an important feature of developing concentration right from the very beginning. Up

to the present point these objects have always been involved in one way or another. But now in the final step the situation is different. Of this last step it may be said:

(1) The mind is not fixed on anything as object.

(2) Despite this absence of special attention everything remains apparent.

(3) There is awareness of all the various elements such as the *Jhāna* Factors, but without any conscious intention. If there were conscious intention, this would imply fixing the mind and would conflict with general awareness.

These are the three important points concerning the state of the mind at the time of entering Absorption.

The next point we shall take up is how the three major groups, namely the five *Jhāna* Factors, the five Mental Faculties, and the ten Characteristics, are directly related to one another when *Jhāna* has been attained. When the mind is on the point of

attaining *Jhāna* mindfulness gathers all the five *Jhāna* Factors together; and at the moment of attaining *Jhāna* the five Factors attain full development. At that moment all the twenty phenomena are present clearly and in full measure.

(I) *The ten Characteristics* will be considered in terms of the three groups recognized earlier:

(A) The mind is sufficiently purified and freed to be able to follow the path to Tranquillity (*samatha*) and finally attain it. The mind at this stage is free from the Hindrances and endowed with all the necessary virtues, under the supervision of Mindfulness. It is without Signs or objects of any kind. It has progressed to the stage of Absorption.

(B) The mind reflects on itself as purified, as having attained to a state of excellence. Through mindfulness, and without any conscious intention, the mind is continuously aware of its own condition, until finally it attains Absorption—just as the carpenter is all the time aware of the wood being steadily sawn

until finally it is cut in two. Thus the mind has abandoned its ordinary, imperfect, unconcentrated state and attained to a lofty state endowed with great virtue. It is said to have "grown great" because it is above the plane of sensuality.

(C) The essential feature of this group is rejoicing, which results from having achieved success without intention. When success is thus achieved rejoicing arises spontaneously— which means that Rapture and Happiness can arise spontaneously as well. Thus all ten Characteristics in their three groups become manifest from the moment the mind attains *samatha-gotrabhū*, that is, from the moment it crosses the threshold of *Jhāna*.

(II) The five *Jhāna* Factors, though at the moment not directly serving as objects, are doing so indirectly. In other words, although they are not objects (Signs) on which the mind is fixed, they are nevertheless objects of the mind's activity of gathering together. In this they resemble Nirvāṇa, which, though it cannot, strictly speaking, be considered an object of the mind, nevertheless serves as an

object in the sense of something at which the mind is aimed in *vipassanā-gotrabhū*, the "Maturity Moment of the Insight Practice." So we can say that a meditator to whom the Counterpart Sign appears in perfect clarity and who guards it successfully is proceeding towards *Appanā-samādhi*; he is engaged in gathering in the *Jhāna* Factors.

When the mind is about to attain *Jhāna* the five *Jhāna* Factors are approaching perfection, and the moment the mind has actually attained it they are perfected. The *Jhāna* Factors are involved in the entire practice of tranquillity meditation — when the mind begins to incline towards *Jhāna*, when it is about to enter *Jhāna*, and finally when it actually enters *Jhāna*.

(III) The five Mental Faculties are present in every phase of the practice, being especially well developed when the mind is about to attain *Jhāna*, though in such a subtle way as to be imperceptible. Only close scrutiny reveals their nature. The Faculty of Confidence (*saddhā*) becomes the more intense the more the meditator practises and achieves success. As progressively more and more evidence of success

appears with each step, so Confidence increases. This holds true at every stage of the practice and can readily be confirmed at the stage when the Counterpart Sign becomes unmistakably evident, or when the mind is sufficiently free from the Hindrances to progress towards Tranquillity. Effort (*viriya*) is to be applied throughout the practice up to the attainment of *Jhāna*, at which point it becomes subtle and delicate and maintains itself quite automatically. Mindfulness (*sati*) has to be present throughout the entire practice watching over every step. At the present point Mindfulness has been developed to the highest degree. Concentration (*samādhi*) has been present ever since the moment the Counterpart Sign arose; but now with the appearance of the five *Jhāna* Factors it is present in full strength. Actually, concentration is present whenever the mind is not distracted, but only as a tool applied to some specific task. Now, however, it is present in full measure as a result of the successful development of Tranquillity (*samatha-bhāvanā*). Henceforth it will become an instrument to aid our practice on a higher level, the development of Insight (*vipassanā-bhāvanā*). Nevertheless, even at this stage of Absorption Concentration is to be regarded as one of the Mental Faculties.

The last of the Mental Faculties, Insight (*paññā*) has a wide range of functioning throughout the entire practice. Discriminating attention (*yoniso-manasikāra*) at any stage, for example in removing the Hindrances, is to be reckoned as the Mental Faculty of Insight. It should be clearly understood, what is more, that the practice of concentration is not separate from that of insight. The two are closely related, as the Buddha affirmed by saying: "There is no Absorption for one who has no Insight." (*natthi jhānam apaññassa*). Even in the act of fixing the mind on the Sign insight is required. Throughout the gradual progress towards Absorption and the final attainment of it Insight is present. The meditator must be fully aware of the approach to *Jhāna*, the *Jhāna* itself, the individual Factors of *Jhāna* and the emergence from *Jhāna*. To look at it from another angle, Insight goes hand in hand with Mindfulness, supporting it at all times. Clearly then, Insight is present even in *Jhāna*. Furthermore, the Mental Faculties of Concentration and Insight, normally regarded as things to be developed separately, become inseparable in function, even in tranquillity meditation.

To summarize metaphorically: The five Mental Faculties are like the hands doing work; the five *Jhāna* Factors are like the work being done; and the ten Characteristics are like the manner in which the work is done on different levels. This is the nature of the inter-relationship of these three major groups, which becomes most evident at the moment of attaining Absorption.

Chapter X

The Four Absorptions

Having dealt with the state of the mind during the First Absorption or *Jhāna*, we shall now go on to discuss the remaining Absorptions, the Second, Third, and Fourth.

The four Absorptions differ mainly in the number of *Jhāna* Factors involved. Each higher Absorption has fewer *Jhāna* Factors than the one preceding it and is correspondingly more subtle and calm. The First Absorption, containing as it does the greatest number of Factors, is the coarsest of the four. The five Factors and their characteristics have already been dealt with in detail. Here we need only deal with the way in which these Factors are successively discarded and how the increased calmness and fineness of the higher Absorptions is developed.

First we must be clear as to just which *Jhāna* Factors are present in each Absorption. In the Pali

canon, which represents the actual spoken words of the Buddha, we find the following account:

(1) In the First Absorption (*paṭhama-jhāna*) all five Factors are present: Applied Thought, Sustained Thought, Rapture, Happiness, and One-pointedness (*vitakka*, *vicāra*, *pīti*, *sukha*, *ekaggatā*).

(2) In the Second Absorption (*dutiya-jhāna*) there are three Factors: Rapture, Happiness, and One-pointedness.

(3) In the Third Absorption (*tatiya-jhāna*) there are two Factors: Happiness and One-pointedness.

(4) In the Fourth Absorption (*catuttha-jhāna*) there are two Factors: One-pointedness and Equanimity.

The account given in the Abhidhamma Piṭaka is somewhat different; but the differences arise merely out of the mode of classification and are in fact of no real significance. Here we shall follow the scheme

found in the Sutta Piṭaka, believed to be the one taught by the Buddha himself.

The First Absorption being constituted of five Factors—Applied Thought, Sustained Thought, Rapture, Happiness, and One-pointedness—it follows that the mind at this stage of Absorption has five channels of awareness within itself. This five-fold awareness is not an active thinking or volition; it is merely awareness accompanied by equanimity. That the channels of awareness are five in number accounts for the fact that the state of mind of the First *Jhāna* is comparatively gross and capable of being refined further. In the First *Jhāna* the mind has not completely calmed down. Hence it is over-burdened and so in danger of back-sliding and losing its exalted state. Insight into this situation prompts the thought: "What if I were to discard some of these Factors in order to make the mind more calm and refined? What if I were to" establish it more firmly in *Jhāna* by reducing its heavy burden and so guard against the possibility of back-sliding and dissipation?" The meditator then considers ways and means of discarding some of the *Jhāna* Factors. Putting this into practice, he discards the Factors in succession until he attains the last *Jhāna*.

To the ordinary man the First Absorption with its five Factors seems extremely tranquil; it is certainly a degree of calm and fineness well beyond the reach of the average man. Still in the eyes of an accomplished meditator or an Ariyan ("Noble One") it is still coarse and unstable and therefore insecure. The meditator therefore strives for the Second and higher *Jhānas*.

The Second Absorption comprises three Factors, *Vitakka* and *Vicāra* having been discarded. When the meditator has considered and examined each of the five Factors thoroughly, he comes to realize that *Vitakka* and *Vicāra* are coarse factors compared with the others. Thus he begins to concentrate on the *Jhāna* Factors in a different way, giving up the awareness of *Vitakka* and *Vicāra*. The more he moves away from these two Factors, the more aware he becomes of the other three. Suppose a person is first looking at five different objects at the same time, and then gives up his interest in two of them, which are grosser than the others. The attention given to the three remaining objects will then be keener, more refined, and more concentrated than it was before he omitted the two gross objects. The way in which

Vitakka and *Vicāra* are dispensed with is the same. First the meditator must leave the Fast Absorption and resume watching his breathing, right from the steps of Counting and Connecting. This is done in order that *Vitakka* and *Vicāra* may be examined; at the start when they are still very coarse. By clearly perceiving their particular characteristics of coarseness the meditator arrives at the mature decision "I will have nothing more to do with these two Factors; I will no longer let them exist in my mind." In this way he manages to diminish *Vitakka* and *Vicāra* while intensifying his concentration on Rapture and Happiness. The resulting Absorption has then only three Factors and is therefore at a higher level in the systematic practice of the Fine-Material Absorptions.

The Third Absorption is constituted of two Factors, the Factor of Rapture having been discarded in the same way as were *Vitakka* and *Vicāra*. Once the meditator has become familiar with the Second Absorption and has reflected on its constituent Factors, he comes to realize that even Rapture is a coarse Factor and that giving it up will bring even greater calm than before. He therefore determines to give up Rapture leaving only Happiness, *sukha*,

without the exhilaration of *pīti*. He then experiences only an exceedingly serene Happiness due to the power of Mindfulness and Clear Comprehension. Thus Rapture has to be given up in the same way as *Vitakka* and *Vicāra*.

The Fourth Absorption is also constituted of two Factors, but here Happiness has been replaced by Equanimity. Here again the same principle applies. Having reflected often on the Factors of the Third Absorption, the meditator realizes that Happiness is a comparatively coarse and turbulent state of mind, that it still wavers and can easily be disturbed, and that it should be refined and calmed down even further. He therefore makes an effort to subdue the feeling of Happiness so that nothing remains but Equanimity, which no longer provides a basis for experiencing Happiness. At this stage the mind is most steadfast and calm. It is bright and pure and devoid of even the most sublime sense of liking or disliking. There remains only detached awareness and the state of one-pointedness with regard to the thing reflected on. What does the mind then reflect on? It reflects on its neutral feeling (*upekkhā-vedanā*), feeling that is neither pleasant; nor

unpleasant. This feeling is based ultimately on the breathing. It is the highest of the Material Absorptions (*rūpa-jhāna*).

Here now is a summary of the distinguishing features of the four Absorptions based on the Buddha's own words as recorded in the Pali canon:

The *First Absorption* arises out of detachment from sensual objects and unwholesome states of mind, and is accompanied by Applied Thought and Sustained Thought and by Rapture: and Happiness, which, though born of Detachment, are still coarse. It is the first level in the Fine-material Realm (*rūpa-jhāna*).

The *Second Absorption* arises through the subsiding of Applied Thought and Sustained Thought and is accompanied by inner tranquillity and oneness of mind and by Rapture—and happiness which are calmer and more refined since born of Concentration. It is the second level in the Fine-material Realm.

The *Third Absorption* arises through the fading away of Rapture, is accompanied by reflection with Mindfulness and Clear Comprehension of the highest order,

and brings the meditator an even more refined Happiness. It is the third level in the Fine-material Realm.

The *Fourth Absorption* arises through the disappearing of all feelings, pleasant and unpleasant, which were present in the earlier stages, and is the purification of Mindfulness which is now, applied to reflection on this neutral feeling. It is the fourth level in the Fine-material Realm.

When the four Absorptions are compared from the practical point of view, certain significant differences become evident. Taking as our basis for comparison the sources, or causes of arising, of the different Absorptions, we see that: the First Absorption is born of detachment from sensuality and unwholesome states of mind; the Second is born of detachment from *Vitakka* and *Vicāra*; the Third is born of detachment from Rapture; and the Fourth is born of detachment from all feelings, pleasant and unpleasant.

As to whether or not the higher Absorptions are, like the First, detached from sensuality and unwholesome states of mind, it should be understood that anything discarded in a lower stage remains absent

in higher stages and is therefore not mentioned again. We mention only things that remain, problems still to be solved, at the higher levels of *Jhāna*. For instance, in the First Absorption sensuality and unwholesome states of mind neither disturb nor even appear to the slightest degree, while *Vitakka* and *Vicāra* are a problem to be dealt with. So, in dealing with the Second Absorption, we no longer, mention sensuality and unwholesome states of mind but speak only of *Vitakka* and *Vicāra*, whose turn it now is to be given up in order to leave a more intensified Rapture and Happiness. On attaining the Third Absorption, the meditator realizes that Rapture must be given up as well in order that the next higher level may be attained in which there remains only Happiness. Finally with the Fourth Absorption, even this very subtle form of Happiness must be given up completely leaving only Equanimity.

Summing up, the First Absorption arises only when there is no more disturbance by sensuality and unwholesome mental states; the Second Absorption arises only when there is no more disturbance by Applied Thought and Sustained Thought, even though they are of the Fine-material Realm; the Third Absorp-

tion arises only when there is no more disturbance by Rapture, even though it is of the Fine-material Realm; and the Fourth Absorption arises only when there is no disturbance by Happiness, even though it is of a lofty and purely spiritual nature. Needless to say there is no disturbance by unpleasant feelings either. This sums up the bases of the various Absorptions and the criteria for the different levels of *Jhāna*.

Taking distinguishing characteristics as the basis for classification, we note that the First Absorption is characterized by Applied Thought and Sustained thought. In the Second Absorption these are discarded and Rapture and Happiness become the distinguishing characteristics. In the Third, Rapture is also discarded. Even Happiness is not very marked, and the distinguishing characteristic is focussing of the mind with perfect Mindfulness and Clear Comprehension. In the Fourth Absorption the distinguishing characteristic is the purification of Mindfulness through Equanimity. These are the distinguishing characteristics of the various *Jhānas*.

Taking the "taste" or happiness concerned with *Jhāna* as our basis for classification, we note that in

the First Absorption Rapture and Happiness are born of detachment; in the Second they are born of Concentration; in the Third there is Happiness alone on a very refined level; and in the Fourth Absorption; there remains only Equanimity with not the least trace of Rapture or Happiness.

Let us elaborate on this a little. In the First Absorption Rapture and Happiness are born of detachment; they are coarse compared with the Rapture and Happiness born of Concentration. This is because in the Fast Absorption Happiness still depends on Applied and Sustained Thought and is merely a state of freedom from disturbance by the Hindrances. Concentration, too, is still rough; it is not yet of the quality required to produce genuine Happiness. In the Second Absorption Concentration has enough power to induce a new kind of Rapture and Happiness subtle than that born of detachment. In the Third Absorption Happiness becomes so refined that Rapture is given up. The Happiness that remains is purely spiritual, an agreeable feeling on a sublime level, befitting a person who truly possesses Mindfulness and Clear Comprehension. The "Noble Ones" acknowledge this as *True* Happi-

ness. In the Fourth Absorption there remains only a calm equanimity which has gone beyond happiness and suffering, beyond liking and disliking. These are the levels of *Jhāna*, recognized on the basis of "taste."

The numerical ordering of the *Jhānas* as First, Second, Third, and Fourth, is purely a labelling device convenient in discussion and study. Anyone familiar with this system of nomenclature knows immediately all the Factors and characteristics involved when the name of any particular *Jhāna* is mentioned.

If the meditator has thoroughly studied the various aspects of the four Absorptions as just explained, his practice proceeds more easily than if he waits for these things to appear before asking what they are and what to do about them. The general student, too, if he understands these matters, can get a fairly accurate picture of the states of mind involved in *Jhāna*. This is likely to arouse his interest in these things, so that he wishes to study them further, rather than looking down on them as of no use to modern Man.

When speaking in technical terms we have to be precise stating how many constituents are necessary to make up a *Jhāna*. The number of constituents in the various *Jhānas* are as follows: The First Absorption has twenty constituents, the Second eighteen, the Third seventeen, and the Fourth also seventeen. They are as, follows:

The twenty constituents of the First Absorption include the ten Characteristics, already explained as "Glorious in their beginning, progress, and consummation," together with the five *Jhāna* Factors and the five Mental Faculties. These twenty together comprise the perfected First Absorption. These twenty constituents are listed in full in order to show precisely the nature of the First Absorption. The meditator should take into account the five Mental Faculties in their proper relationship with the *Jhāna* Factors and the ten Characteristics, as has already been explained in detail. He should take these ten Characteristics as definite criteria for the attainment of *Jhāna*. He must not carelessly think of the First Absorption as consisting merely of the five *Jhāna* Factors. It is to make such points clear that we are here specifying the twenty constituents of First Absorption in detail.

The Second Absorption has eighteen constituents. Here the same remarks apply as with the First Absorption except that two *Jhāna* Factors have now been discarded, namely Applied Thought (scanning) and Sustained Thought (focussing). There remain only three Factors, Rapture, Happiness, and One-pointedness. Thus the constituents of the Second Absorption number only eighteen: ten Characteristics, three *Jhāna* Factors, and five Mental Faculties. The relationships of these three groups to one another are as in the First Absorption.

The Third Absorption has seventeen constituents: The same remarks apply once again, except that a further *Jhāna* Factor has been discarded; only Happiness and One-pointedness remain in. Thus there are only seventeen constituents: ten Characteristics, two *Jhāna* Factors, and five Mental Faculties. Their inter-relationships are as before.

The Fourth Absorption has seventeen constituents: There are two *Jhāna* Factors, for although Happiness has given way to Equanimity, Equanimity also counts as a *Jhāna* Factor. Thus there are ten

Characteristics, two *Jhāna* Factors, and five Mental Faculties, as in the Third Absorption.

To sum up, these different numbers of constituents are a measuring rod for studying and precisely examining the several Absorptions. Note that while the Factors of *Jhāna* vary from one Absorption to another, the ten Characteristics and the five Mental Factors are present in all of them. This means that because of the ten Characteristics, the last three Absorptions are, just like the First, "Glorious in their beginning, progress, and consummation." The Mental Faculties become stronger the higher the level of *Jhāna*, although their function remains the same throughout. Confidence, Effort, Mindfulness, Concentration, and Insight each becomes more refined and stronger in order to meet requirements for progressing to the next *Jhāna*. Thus, although the Mental Faculties do not vary in number, their strength and efficiency vary considerably according to level of *Jhāna*. Once the above points are taken into consideration, the differences among the Absorptions become clear.

Chapter XI

Five Kinds Of Mastery

Finally we come to what is known as Mastery of the *Jhāna* (*vasī*). *Vasī* means experience, proficiency, skill in some task that one is doing. A man possessed of *vasī* is endowed with absolute mastery over something.

Literally the word *vasī* means "one who has power," which here implies one who has power over his actions, who can do what he wants to do, as can a powerful man. He is able to act with proficiency, speed, and skill, unhindered by anything, and succeeding as he wishes. Power in practising *samādhi* is the result of skill in practice. The more skilful one is, the more power one acquires. Therefore the meaning of *vasī* here is precisely "one who has power because he has skill in means." Such a person has skill in relation to *Jhāna* in five ways:

1) Skill in adverting the mind to Absorption,
2) Skill in entering Absorption,

3) Skill in maintaining Absorption,
4) Skill in emerging from Absorption,
5) Skill in reviewing Absorption.

These are explained as follows:

(1) *Mastery in adverting the mind* (*āvajjana vasī*): This means skill in quickly fixing the mind on the objects, Signs, and *Jhāna* Factors; and ability to increase this speed at will. When the meditator has practised until he can induce the First Absorption, he should ask himself: "Just *how* did I fix my mind on objects, Signs, and *Jhāna* Factors? How long did it take to fix the mind on each object at the different steps? This time I shall do it all better and more rapidly. "Thus he practises afresh right from the very beginning, again and again, and trains himself in fixing his mind more rapidly each time. He increases the speed with which he is able to fix his mind on the in- and out-breaths, on the *phusanā* and the *ṭhapnā*, to induce the Acquired Sign and the Counterpart Sign, and finally, on the basis of the Counterpart Sign, to gather in the five *Jhāna* Factors. Briefly put, to acquire this Mastery means to become proficient in fixing the mind on objects, Signs, and *Jhāna* Factors by repeated practice.

To gain speed in attaining each step and to accelerate the progress from step to step, the meditator should practise like this: When he has increased his speed of adverting to a certain object, then he should, in the beginning stages, observe that object for just as long as it takes to see it clearly and then try to move on to the next object. This is important for firmness of the object which can now be adverted to at the newly increased rate. He should go on doing this in due order and at the same time should gradually increase his speed until finally he is skilful enough to be able to advert instantly to anything at any step, from the different objects and Signs right up to the gathering in of the five *Jhāna* Factors. As a result of this kind of practice he will be able in his later *samādhi* practice to increase his speed with each successive attempt, and also improve in firmness and steadiness.

As an analogy, consider the case of a person learning to cook, selecting and preparing the ingredients. The first time he does this he is clumsy and slow; it takes him a long time to get all the ingredients ready according to the recipe. However, when he cooks the same dish for the second, third, or fourth time, he is

able to prepare it more quickly each time. Finally it becomes child's play to him. This is the result of experience and skill gained from observing in his previous attempts which ingredients are needed and in what proportions. Eventually he is able to cook without any trouble at all. The same applies to anyone who has attained *Jhāna* for the first time and then practises to gain mastery in adverting the mind to each successive object, Sign, and *Jhāna* Factor.

(2) *Mastery in entering Jhāna* (*samāpajjana-vasī*): "Entering *Jhāna*" here means the mind's activity of gathering in the Factors of *Jhāna* on the basis of the Counterpart Sign. Gathering all the Factors together for the first time is hard work and slow, and must be practised and speeded up as just explained. The objective is to be able to call forth the Counterpart Sign instantly and to be able to achieve awareness of the five Factors by making them appear all at once with ever-increasing proficiency. The meditator must persevere with this practice until finally he is so proficient at it that he is able to attain Absorption the moment he decides to. In fact there is nothing new here; the meditator practises just as before until he gains mastery and can enter

Jhāna with great speed and efficiency. Being a purely mental process, this entering of *Jhāna* can be speeded up until it can be done in the time it takes to snap the fingers or blink the eyes.

The analogy of the cook applies also. Our cook, who used to take a full hour to prepare a certain dish, becomes able to do it in fifty minutes, forty minutes, thirty minutes, gradually reducing the time. Finally he becomes so proficient that he can do the job in the shortest time physically possible, perhaps taking only ten minutes or so. As he becomes more proficient in getting ready the ingredients and cooking them, the speed of the whole process increases accordingly. The cook's proficiency in preparing the ingredients corresponds to the meditator's Mastery in Adverting; while proficiency in the cooking itself corresponds to Mastery in Entering. Only when the meditator can enter *Jhāna* at any desired speed, whether in the wink of an eye or longer, has he Mastery in Entering.

(3) *Mastery in Remaining in Jhāna* (*adhiṭṭhāna-vasī*): Literally the word *adhiṭṭhāna* means "to be established in." Here it implies having established

the staying or dwelling in *Jhāna*. Mastery in remaining in *Jhāna* means ability to stay in *Jhāna* for as long as one wishes. In the beginning the meditator lacks this ability. He must train himself to stay in *Jhāna* for progressively longer periods, for a few minutes, a few hours, and finally for the maximum possible duration, namely seven days. He must also train himself to remain in *Jhāna* for exactly the length of the time he resolves beforehand. If he decides to stay in *Jhāna* for five minutes he should stay for exactly five minutes, not a single second more or less. Only then can he be said to have Mastery in Remaining in *Jhāna*.

Actually the most important kinds of Mastery are proficiency in entering and emerging from *Jhāna*. Remaining in *Jhāna* is merely the interval between entering and emerging; so if the meditator can control at will his entering and emerging, the duration of his stay in *Jhāna* is automatically taken care of. Mastery in Remaining automatically implies Mastery in Entering and Emerging.

The ability to sleep for exactly the length of time intended and wake up on the instant is considered

wonderful; but far more marvellous than this is for a meditator to train himself and develop the Mastery of remaining in *Jhāna*, demanding as it does so much more power of resolution. All this becomes possible with the power gained from strict training; in the end the meditator is entitled to be regarded as *vasī*, one who has power.

This situation corresponds, in our analogy of the cook, to the serving up of the prepared food. This is the next kind of proficiency gained by the cook once he has mastered the preparing of the raw ingredients and the cooking of them.

How long the meditator should stay in *Jhāna* depends on his motives for entering in the first place. For instance if he is seeking tranquillity then he remains in Absorption for as long as he sees fit. But if he is entering a lower *Jhāna* merely in order to move on to a higher one, then of course he stays in that lower *Jhāna* for a short time only. If one enters *Jhāna* in order to develop some kind of mental power, the transition to the higher stages of *Jhāna* *is* to be achieved still more quickly. Only one who has the ability to enter, remain, and emerge as and

when he wishes is reckoned as having Mastery in Remaining in *Jhāna*.

(4) *Mastery in Emerging from Jhāna* (*vuṭṭhāna-vasī*): This is the reverse of Mastery in Entering. It consists in proficiency in emerging from Absorption. A meditator should come out of *Jhāna* by the same way that he entered it. Anyone who is not proficient in coming out does so very slowly — at least he cannot emerge as quickly as he wishes from *Jhāna* to the ordinary state of awareness. The meditator has to train himself to withdraw just as quickly as he enters. To achieve this he must first practise withdrawing gradually from the awareness of *Jhāna* to awareness of the *Jhāna* Factors, then to Counterpart Sign and Acquired Sign, and so back to the Preparatory Sign, that is the refined breathing and finally to the normal breathing. When he has practised this thoroughly he can emerge with lightning speed — in which case it is of course difficult to observe the various stages.

The best way to develop this Mastery is to train slowly and carefully in the systematic step-by-step manner just mentioned: from being established in

Jhāna to fixing the mind on the *Jhāna* Factors, then reverting to the Counterpart Sign, to the Acquired Sign, to fixing the mind on *ṭhapanā* and *phusanā*, and then to the Preliminary Work (*parikamma*) in which the mind is fixed on the long in- and out-breaths. If the meditator practises conscientiously in this orderly fashion his speed will increase until ultimately the process of emerging takes place in a flash. A meditator who has achieved that stage is to be regarded as having absolute power or *vasī* in emerging.

(5) *Mastery in Reviewing Jhāna* (*paccavekkhaṇa-vasī*): This means proficiency in thoroughly reviewing the different factors and procedures involved and their relationships to the *Jhāna*. This skill in reviewing must be developed if the meditator is to be proficient and quick in every aspect of the practice. He must review the whole process forwards and in reverse, which means recapitulating the entire course of the practice. The way to practise this Mastery is as follows: After having emerged from *Jhāna* the meditator must not immediately stand up, but must remain seated; he must not direct his mind to some other topic, but rather should

reflect on the *Jhāna*. He should review it from, start to finish, that is, review thoroughly all the steps involved in Entering and Emerging by letting the mind "sweep back and forth." While reviewing the process of attainment of Absorption, the meditator should review from the very beginning up to entry into *Jhāna*, and the experiencing of the happiness of freedom from impurities that results from remaining in *Jhāna*. Having done this for a sufficient length of time, he should likewise review the process of withdrawing from Absorption right back to the stage of Preliminary Work. Reviewing in this way, he sees his *samādhi* from beginning to end, both "the forward trip and the return," examining all the steps in detail and thereby gaining ever more understanding and skill for further practice. This practice has the additional good effect of arousing interest in the development of the Bases for Success (*iddhi-pāda*) and bringing about the maturing of the Mental Faculties, making them ever stronger. Unless the meditator is proficient in this last Mastery, he cannot truly acquire the preceding four kinds of Mastery. Hence this *vasī* of Reviewing includes all the proficiencies involved in the other fields of Mastery.

Anyone who has perfected these five kinds of practice is reckoned as having Mastery of the First Absorption. His task is then to train further and gain Mastery in the remaining Absorptions, the Second, Third, and Fourth. Once he has attained the Second Absorption the meditator must train himself in all the five kinds of Mastery just as he did in the case of the First; there is no difference except in level. Thus the meditator progresses through the four *Jhānas*. However in carrying out this training the meditator must start each time from the very beginning of the First Absorption. He has to be proficient in each and every phase of the whole course of practice right from beginning to end; he must not carelessly skip over the early stages and train himself only in the later steps. Since mental training is an extremely delicate procedure, Mastery of any step already gained may easily be lost again; consequently it is necessary to go through the whole course of practice every time. Even though the meditator has practised in this way and has reached the Fourth Absorption, while practising in order to gain Mastery in the Fourth Absorption, he must go back each time and practise from the very beginning of the first Absorption. This must be done in order to gain skill in the

whole procedure of practice and proficiency in moving from one Absorption to another. This kind of practice not only brings full understanding of and steadiness in Absorption, it can also lead on to higher attainments, such as the four Non-material Absorptions, for anyone interested in attaining them.

To sum up, training in the five kinds of Mastery is carried out in order to develop skill, speed and ability in entering Absorption at will. In other words it gives the meditator control or power over the Absorptions —which is what the term *vasī* really means. This training in the five kinds of Mastery is so important that if it is not carried out the practice will bog down and finally collapse altogether. The meditator must observe and see the necessity for practising over and over again to become proficient. This applies of course to every kind of work. A person practising music, for example, may in the beginning practise a certain tune or only a part of it; and if he does not work hard at it and does not really master it, he forgets it again after only a few days. Moreover if he leaves it and starts practising a different tune, he will become confused and mix up the two tunes. So in every kind of work it is necessary to practise and gain

skill in every part of the job right from the beginning; and this is particularly true in the case of mental training such as this developing of the Absorptions. Even school-children studying mathematics have to be drilled to memorize multiplication tables and so on, to be well-versed in every step of the subject; only then can they carry on and study further. Without this basic work and constant revision everything becomes confused. This is what is meant by Mastery. This proficiency leads to greater speed and dexterity and to seemingly miraculous abilities.

To illustrate Mastery, we may instance the speed of a skilled worker who can make bricks or pots so fast that an ordinary person is baffled to see him at it, working twenty times faster than himself. And finally, skill and speed are the means of achieving the intended result. These are the benefits of the fivefold Mastery. Every meditator must take special interest in these five kinds of Mastery and train himself in them enthusiastically; if he does, he will have in his hands Stage iv of *Ānāpānasati*; he will have gained Mastery over the process of "calming the bodily formation" and be able, within a very short time, to bring it to perfection.

Stage iv of *Ānāpānasati*, "calming the bodily formation," has now been explained at length. It can be summarized in terms of the following four phases:

(1) In the first phase the breathing is coarse and the meditator takes it as his Sign. He concentrates on this Sign very intently, really putting his heart into the task, until eventually the breathing is no longer coarse.

(2) In the second phase the breathing is fine and delicate, and this the meditator takes as his Sign. He concentrates on the fine breathing until eventually it too disappears.

(3) In the third phase the fine breathing no longer appears in the meditator's consciousness since it has given rise to a new Sign, a mental image. The meditator then takes this image as his object of concentration.

(4) In the fourth phase the meditator concentrates his mind on this image and finally attains one-pointedness.

When all this has been carried out successfully, it can be said that the calming of the bodily formation has been achieved.

Chapter XII

Summary Of Stages I To IV

The first Tetrad of *Ānāpānasati* may be summarized thus:

Stage i: Concentration on long breathing.

Stage ii: Concentration on short breathing.

Stage iii: Concentration on every aspect of the breathing:

Stage vi: Concentration on the breathing, which as a result becomes progressively calmer until Absorption is attained.

The meditator begins by concentrating on the breathing, at first in a forced way and then in a natural way, until the breathing is at all times well regulated. Then he transfers attention to the so-called Counterpart Sign, the mental image that arises out of concentration. Finally he abandons the Sign also. He now develops another kind of awareness which results from his increasingly delicate concentration.

Thus his mind attains a state of utmost calm known as Absorption or *Jhāna*. The breathing is actually present at all stages but it gradually changes from its normal coarse condition to a condition so fine that eventually the meditator is not aware of it at all. It is then loosely said to have become "extinct." This point marks the completion of the first Tetrad.

This state of great calm is the consummation of the practice of tranquillity meditation. It is called the State of Bliss Here-and-Now (*diṭṭha-dhamma-sukha-vihāra*). This bliss here-and-now has the same taste as the bliss of Nirvāṇa, differing from it only in being temporary and liable to change. Some people are content with this temporary bliss and never aspire to anything higher. Before the time of the Buddha there were people who mistook this state for Nirvāṇa itself. Those who had right understanding could see that there was something higher than this to be attained; for them the Buddha taught higher forms of practice, which are covered by the remaining STAGES, V to XVI.

It must not be forgotten that there exists another way of practice which leads to intuitive insight

directly. This is the way of Emancipation through Insight, which by-passes the Jhānas. A meditator who has practised only as far as Neighbourhood Concentration may proceed directly to insight meditation (*vipassanā-bhāvanā*), which aims at bringing insight into the three universal characteristics of impermanence, unsatisfactoriness, and non-selfhood.

Thus anyone who has practised up to the last Stage of the first Tetrad may well omit the second and third Tetrads and proceed directly to the fourth, which is directly concerned with the developing of insight. For the sake of completeness we shall discuss the second and third Tetrads also, but anyone who wishes to take the short-cut should by-pass them and take up the practice leading directly to insight.

CHAPTER XIII

THE SECOND TETRAD

(from the Contemplation of Feeling to
not letting Feeling condition the Mind)

Now we come to the method of practice in the second Tetrad which deals with the next four steps:

(v) Experiencing rapture while breathing in and out

(vi) Experiencing bliss while breathing in and out

(vii) Being aware of the mental formation while breathing in and out

(viii) Calming the mental formation while breathing in and out

These four stages together form a group in mental development in which feeling is used as an object of meditation in place of the bodily-formation (i.e., the breathing) as in the first Tetrad.

Stage v

The first step of the second Tetrad or the fifth Stage in the whole of the *ānāpānasati* practice is:

> "Experiencing rapture, I shall breathe out,"
> thus he trains himself;
>
> "Experiencing rapture, I shall breathe in,"
> thus he trains himself."

Accordingly there are three main points: 1. training oneself 2. experiencing rapture while breathing in and out 3. knowledge (*ñāṇa*) mindfulness (*sati*) and other things (*dhammas*) which arise as a result of practice in this Stage.

Let us consider the first point "training oneself". This involves the threefold training of Morality or Higher Virtue (*adhisīla*), Higher Concentration (*adhicitta*—lit. Higher Mind) and Insight or Higher Wisdom (*adhipaññā*)—as in the case of the previous steps (see especially Stage iii, pp. 120–130). In

the present Stage, the meditator contemplates rapture rather than the breathing.

Having induced rapture, the meditator maintains mindfulness so as to be aware of that rapture by way of contemplation — that is what is meant by "training oneself".

As long as he maintains mindfulness of rapture, he is established in Higher Virtue because during all that time he does no harm to anybody and his body and speech are composed in the full sense of the term "higher virtue."

And when he contemplates rapture as an object of mind so that there is no distraction, agitation, etc., then he is fully established in higher concentration because the mind is calm, firm and one-pointed in the full sense of the term "higher concentration", and it is ready for developing wisdom.

And when he contemplates rapture in this Stage as being impermanent, unsatisfactory, non-selfhood, no-self or void, then he has "higher wisdom" in its full sense.

Thus the whole threefold training can be seen it the act of contemplating rapture when this act is viewed from different angles of the practice.

It should be noted here that the terms “he trains himself” as found in all the following stages as well has, in essence, the same meaning as here. The only difference is the object of concentration, which varies in each case. For example, in this Stage the object is rapture, the next stage has bliss as the object, the stage after that has the mental-formation as the object, and so on. This is the principle which the meditator must clearly understand from the beginning in order to be fully aware of the fact that with each stage of *ānāpānasati*, higher virtue, higher concentration and higher wisdom are present together.

The second point is: “Experiencing rapture”.

The Pali term *Pīti* (rapture) literally means “joy” but also includes such feelings as delight, (*pāmujja*), rejoicing (*āmodanā*), joyousness (*pamodanā*), cheerfulness (*hāsa*), glee (*pahāsa*),

elation of mind (*cittassa odagyaṃ*), satisfaction of mind (*cittassa attamanatā*). Briefly, the meaning is heart-felt satisfaction born of the feeling of progress. Rapture is the very result of success in the practice of *ānāpānasati* right from the first stage until this stage when rapture is developed fully — the mind is free of distraction, calm and one-pointed. In the fifth Stage the meditator is contemplating rapture directly.

Arising Of Rapture

There are various ways for the arising of rapture, both high and low, gross and subtle, according to the nature of the contemplation and its object.

These various ways can be recognized as sixteen in number:

(1) When the meditator knows (*pajānato*) that the mind is not distracted but one-pointed (concentrated) by the power of contemplating long or short breathing or being fully aware of the whole breathing or by calming the breathing

(bodily-formation), i.e., throughout the four bases or eight modes[1], rapture arises.

(2) When he contemplates (*āvajjato*) that the mind is not distracted but one-pointed (concentrated) by the power of contemplating long or short breathing, etc.... in the above-mentioned eight modes, rapture arises.

(3) When he perceives (*jānato*) that the mind is not distracted but one-pointed (concentrated) by the power of contemplating long or short breathing, etc.... in the above-mentioned eight modes, rapture arises.

(4) When he sees clearly (*passato*) that the mind is not distracted but one-pointed by the power of contemplating long or short breathing, etc.... rapture arises.

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1. For convenience "breathing out" is referred to as a "mode", likewise "breathing in". The two taken together are referred to as a "base" of which there are four in each of the four tetrads (hence eight modes in every tetrad).

(5) When he reflects (*paccavekkhato*) that the mind is not distracted but one-pointed by the power of contemplating long or short breathing, etc.... rapture arises.

(6) When he decides mentally (*cittaṃ adhiṭṭhāto*) that the mind, etc.... rapture arises.

(7) When he resolves with faith (*saddhāya adhimuccato*) that the mind, etc.... rapture arises.

(8) When he exerts energy (*viriyaṃ paggaṇhāto*) that the mind, etc.... rapture arises.

(9) When he establishes mindfulness (*Satiṃupaṭṭhā-payato*) so that the mind, etc.... rapture arises.

(10) When he concentrates the mind (*cittaṃ samādahato*) so that the mind, etc.... rapture arises.

(11) When he knows clearly through wisdom (*paññāya pajānato*) that the mind, etc.... rapture arises.

(12) When he knows thoroughly through the highest knowledge (*abhiññāya abhijānato*) that the mind, etc.... rapture arises.

(13) When he understands what is to be understood (*pariññeyyaṃ pajahato*) so that the mind, etc.... rapture arises.

(14) When he abandons what should be abandoned (*pahātabbaṃ pajahato*) so that the mind, etc.... rapture arises.

(15) When he develops what should be developed (*bhāvetabbaṃ bhāvayato*) so that the mind, etc.... rapture arises.

(16) When he realizes what should be realized (*sacchikātabbaṃ sacchikaroto*) so that the mind, etc.... rapture arises.

Each of these sixteen ways individually shows the cause of the arising of rapture. They will now be explained briefly:

According to items, 1 to 5, rapture arises because one contemplates and is aware of non-distraction

through one-pointedness of mind through breathing in and out, in each of the four bases or eight modes of the first Tetrad. This means rapture can arise while one is contemplating breathing in any of the four bases. Items 1 to 5 show the five ways of contemplation arranged in ascending order from low to high or gross to subtle: contemplation in general is called *pajānanaṃ*; contemplation of a higher level is specific and is called *āvajjanaṃ*; knowing clearly is at a still higher level and is called *jānanaṃ*; seeing clearly is higher again in level and is called *passanaṃ*; lastly specific reflection in detail is termed *paccavekkhanaṃ*. All these five ways are directed towards concentration of mind and consequently rapture arises in each case.

In each of the five cases rapture differs in intensity, being gross or subtle according to the nature of the contemplation. Item 6 says one "decides mentally" —this implies the directing of the mind to some higher state and keeping it firmly set on that state without any change. To be specific, the meditator here directs his mind towards attaining calmness in the practice of meditation. Rapture arises because the mind is successfully set at that time.

Items 7 to 11 imply that each of the five mental faculties operates in full swing and thereby rapture arises. Item 7 means that the meditator resolves all doubts and believes that his practice is his refuge, and thus rapture arises. Item 8 means that there is an even greater earnestness owing to the previous power of satisfaction from rapture, and that this gives the meditator more energy to practice.

Item 9 means that when the meditator is able to maintain mindfulness to his satisfaction, i.e., can develop mindfulness as required in all stages of the practice, rapture arises. Item 10 means that awareness by the meditator that he is able to concentrate the mind gives rise to rapture. Item 11 means rapture born out of knowledge that he is able to induce wisdom (*paññā*); he knows clearly through wisdom all the characteristics concerned with the eight modes of breathing. All these five ways (7 to 11) are also based on the eight modes of breathing, but they are successively more subtle in quality.

Item 12 means knowledge on a higher level than is mentioned in item 11, that is to say, the meditator knows more than just the characteristics concerned

with breathing. He knows more about the things (*dhammas*) directly leading to cessation of suffering, and consequently rapture arises.

The four items 13 to 16 refer to direct knowledge of the Four Noble Truths: Item 13 implies clear knowledge about suffering; the meditator knows suffering and its nature; rapture arises because in suffering he finds the main source of trouble and is full of hope to destroy it. Item 14 implies knowledge that the cause of suffering is defilements (*kilesa*). He knows, too, he has destroyed, and is destroying, some defilements and consequently rapture arises. Item 15 means knowledge of the thing which should be developed or has developed or is developing. This refers to the way leading to the cessation of suffering. By destroying his defilements while contemplating breathing in this stage some forms of suffering calm down or are destroyed. On knowing that this method will end suffering rapture arises. Item 16 is to know what should be realized, i.e., the state of extinction of suffering called Cessation (*nirodha*) or the Unconditioned (*Nibbāna*) or Deliverance (*vimutti*). A state of freedom from suffering appears clearly in proportion to the destruction of defilements. When

he is aware of this state of freedom from suffering, even for a moment, rapture arises. Contemplation in these four ways is also based on the eight modes of breathing as already mentioned.

To sum up, no matter whether rapture is strong or weak, it is based entirely on breathing in and out. Therefore, it has been said "Experiencing rapture I shall breathe out… shall breathe in". Each kind of rapture here is an object of contemplation of breathings in this Stage. Let the meditator gradually train himself and induce rapture in the full sense of the term and he will be entitled to be called "one having perfection in the fifth Stage of *ānāpānasati*".

The Method Of Dealing With Rapture

For further progress, the practice based on all the kinds of rapture which have arisen as objects is as follows:

(a) **Experiencing rapture**. When the meditator has induced rapture through any of the sixteen ways and is fully aware of it all the time while breathing in and out, then he is called "one experiencing rapture".

An important point must now be considered. While experiencing rapture what else is known? What follows this knowledge so that finally suffering ceases through the practice of ānāpānasati?

When rapture has appeared clearly in any one of the sixteen ways based on breathing, then feeling (*vedanā*) has become manifest. Rapture is here called feeling because it is experienced by the meditator as a kind of feeling, and it is therefore convenient to use the term rapture[2] in a conventional sense to mean feeling for the purposes of practical instruction. The term bliss (*sukha*), used in the sixth Stage, is also included in feeling (*vedanā*). The arising of feeling depends on breathing in and out and becomes manifest through mindfulness.

As to the question: What is the nature of contemplation? There are two kinds of contemplation:

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2. According to Abhidhammic technical classification rapture (*pīti*) belongs to the aggregate of Mental Formations (*saṅkhāra-khandha*) and not that of Feeling (*vedanā*). For the five Aggregates see Stage viii.

Firstly, by way of object or sign (*ārammaṇa-upanijjhāna*) for focussing the mind on one single point in order to gain concentration; secondly, contemplation by way of characteristic (*lakkaṇa-upanijjhāna*) for seeing the true nature of things in terms of impermanence, unsatisfactoriness and no-self. This second kind of contemplation is meant for seeing the characteristics of feeling (*vedanā*) as they really are, and so leads to wisdom (*paññā*).

Therefore mindfulness, besides enabling one to gain concentration, also leads to knowledge (*ñāṇa*) of the characteristics of things. When the meditator knows the characteristics, this means *ñāṇa* has arisen in him; this practice then involves both *sati* and *ñāṇa*. To "experience rapture" he must have both mindfulness (*sati*) and knowledge (*ñāṇa*) as both are concerned with feeling.

To conclude, feeling, born out of contemplation of breathing, becomes manifest: Mindfulness performs the function of *Insight Knowledge* (*anupassanā-ñāṇa*)—contemplation, knowledge and awareness in one. Feeling serves as an object of contemplation by means of mindfulness, which leads the meditator

to concentration and also leads to, or performs the function of, knowledge.

The meditator contemplates (*anupassati*) feeling by means of that mindfulness and that knowledge and this practice is the kind of development (*bhāvanā*) known as "the development of the establishment of mindfulness" (*satipaṭṭhāna-bhāvanā*); since mindfulness contemplates feeling this practice has the name of *Vedanānupassanā-satipaṭṭhāna-bhāvanā*, which means the Development of Establishment of Mindfulness Consisting in Contemplation of Feelings. Since *bhāvanā* involves contemplating the different kinds of *pīti* resulting in the sixteen ways, it is referred to as, *Vedanāsuvedanānupassanā-satipaṭṭhāna-bhāvanā*, "the Development of the Establishment of Mindfulness Consisting in Contemplation of Feelings in the Feelings". Now the next thing to be taken into account is the way in which the meditator contemplates (*anupassati*) that rapture or feeling by means of that mindfulness and that knowledge.

(b) **Contemplating** (*anupassanā*) **rapture**. This implies that the meditator contemplates the characteristics of rapture as a feeling; he does not consider

it as a factor of *Jhāna* as he did in the fourth Stage. To contemplate, to see the characteristics of things (*anupassanā*) involves altogether seven stages, which must be examined in depth since the whole practice of *ānāpānasati* from the present stage onward is intended for this very Anupassanā in its seven stages.

Anupassanā—First Stage. The feeling of rapture is contemplated as being impermanent, not as permanent, and so the meditator abandons the perception of permanence (*nicca-saññā*).

When the meditator practises in such a way that he is able to watch, follow and contemplate the feeling wisely, correctly and in detail then he sees clearly the impermanence of feeling. Previously, of course, he may have conceived of feeling as permanent but since right understanding has arisen "the meditator abandons the perception of permanence".

In order to understand the practice from this stage onward the simple expression "he sees (feeling) as impermanent and, in doing so abandons the perception of permanence" should always be borne in mind

as an expression with very wide connotation. The expression covers the arising of all other things (*dhammas*) which simultaneously arise or become more developed than before. "All other things" refer to what are called the Mental Faculties (*indriya*), the Mental Powers (*bala*), the Factors of Enlightenment (*bojjhaṅga*), the Eightfold Path (*aṭṭhaṅgika-magga*), and other factors depending on the manner of observing the dhammas. Thus this short expression "he sees (feeling) as impermanent and in doing so abandons the perception of permanence", is not as simple as it appears. Later we will examine how the knowledge of impermanence and the abandoning of the perception of permanence can bring about the arising of so many things (*dhammas*). Here in passing we have pointed out this fact merely in order to make it known that this simple expression is in no way simple, that it should not be taken at its face value or as vague, but that it has deep meaning connoting many things. If this deep meaning of the expression has not yet been fully realized, the meditator should not jump to the conclusion that he sees impermanence or that he has given up the perception of permanence. It is imperative that this point be considered and practised wisely; this can be

achieved by examining the feeling itself so closely that there actually arises in the meditator weariness (*nibbidā*) and detachment (*virāga*). Then he can claim to be one who sees impermanence and abandons the perception of permanence in the real sense of the word.

Anupassanā — Second Stage. In this Stage the meditator contemplates feelings as unsatisfactory (*dukkha*) not as pleasurable, and in doing so he abandons the perception of pleasure (*sukha-saññā*).

In this case those who have merely book-knowledge and beginners will be bewildered, believing that rapture is pleasure (*sukkha*). How can rapture be regarded as unsatisfactory? Those, however, who have trained themselves up to this step will not be bewildered because the wisdom which they have already accumulated can penetrate deep into the core of things. Briefly, the meditator, on seeing feeling as impermanent and illusory, is greatly moved (*saṃvejita*) by, and weary of, feeling; thus he sees the characteristics of suffering in this feeling and simultaneously the way in which suffering is brought about by feeling. This wisdom is earned

through his awareness and not based on books or from teachers. Generally speaking a man of practice conducts his practice with the minimum of studying because few problems arise compared with those of the man of book-knowledge. Therefore, the expression "he sees feeling of pleasure (*sukha-vedanā*) as being unsatisfactory" is quite correct and is truly understood only by the man of practice. When the meditator contemplates in this way the perception of pleasure is abandoned automatically.

Anupassanā — Third Stage. In this stage the meditator contemplates feelings as no-self (*anattā*) and not as self, and in doing so abandons the perception of self (*atta-saññā*).

This point can be explained easily when it is viewed in relation to the foregoing two points. When feeling has clearly shown its nature as being impermanent and unsatisfactory the meditator becomes aware. He contemplates further: "such being the case how can I take it as mine and how can it be something substantial? If the feeling is something in itself, then it should not be conditioned or changed by different causes. Further, if it is fittingly to be called

“mine”, then it should not cause suffering for me nor should it cause any thrill of fear (*saṃvega*) and boredom for me, contemplating in this way”.

Once again, book-knowledge is simply not sufficient to understand this stage. The understanding of no-self must result from a genuine understanding of *dukkha* in the same way as understanding of suffering must result from a genuine understanding of impermanence. Mere knowledge, based on logical thinking, speculation or imagination, cannot help one realize the characteristics of no-self (*anattā*). Without the practice of meditation no practical result can be brought about for the destruction of defilements. Ordinary knowledge can only be used for thinking, talking and teaching.

Before taking up a factor for contemplation, it is clear that the meditator must have already a well-trained mind, i.e., a mind that has attained to absorption (*Jhāna*): a mind that is swift and can penetrate thoroughly. It must also be stressed that whatever is adopted for contemplation must be clearly manifest in the mind, such as this kind of rapture or feeling with which we are concerned here.

Outside objects should not be used, the rapture must arise in the mind.

Why is the wording "this kind of feeling" used? The answer is that feeling based on sensuality (*kāma*), etc., cannot be used for contemplation. A feeling such as rapture is based on *Dhamma* or renunciation (*nekkhamma*). The development of "this kind of rapture" indicates without doubt that it is much stronger than the ordinary rapture used in everyday language. The spoken word does not reveal the characteristics of impermanence, unsatisfactoriness and no-self. Why? Because the spoken word belongs to things outside and not something experienced inside. Words cannot be transformed into experience, cannot change into experience and cannot change one kind of experience into another kind of experience. One must experience directly in the mind kind of weariness (*nibbidā*) and detachment (*virāga*) that lead to the Noble Path and Noble Fruition.

When the meditator is really aware of feeling as no-self, the defilement of the perception of self (*atta-saññā*) is simply abandoned. Whether it is abandoned absolutely or only temporarily depends on the

intensity of penetration. If it is abandoned completely, final emancipation (*Arahatta*) is realized. In general practice, the perception of self has subsided, which is temporarily the basis for practising further until the end is reached. In this step, the expression "abandoning the perception of self... etc." has the implication of temporary calming down of *atta-saññā*. However, if different things such as the mental faculties of a person operate in full, he can develop penetrative insight to the extent that, even through STAGE V, he can realize the Fruition of Holiness (*arahatta-phala*).

Anupassanā—Fourth Stage. In this stage the meditator comes to be wearied (*nibbindati*) of that feeling and takes no pleasure in it; he abandons the enjoyment (*nandi*) of pleasant feelings. By seeing feelings, including rapture as impermanent, unsatisfactory and no-self, he cannot revel in them or be deluded or enchanted by them or even satisfied with them. This state is still called "experiencing rapture", because rapture is manifest, together with its characteristics of impermanence, etc., and likewise weariness. It should be noted that this feeling called rapture must always be manifest in the mind

otherwise weariness has no object and is not firmly established. If rapture is not manifest weariness will become rather vague, just as the weariness which the intellectual has imagined will be vague unless his knowledge has come through true realization.

Trained in this way, the mind is able to contemplate rapture and its characteristics of impermanence, etc., which now form the foundation for weariness, a weariness far removed from weariness based on book-knowledge.

The meaning of the term "weariness" differs at different levels. There is the weariness due to repetition, such as constantly eating the same food, or the weariness due to disturbance which becomes a nuisance. These definitions have no bearing on the "weariness" (*nibbidā*) as used in the Pali and especially as a technical term in the practice of Dhamma. Weariness in the Dhamma sense must first result from the thorough penetration of impermanence, etc. which gives rise to fear and disgust for attachment to things in terms of "I" and "mine" or in terms of mere (even thought of) "I love" or "I like". This shows clearly that weariness in the *Dhamma*

sense must be based on some fervour (*saṃvega*)—induced by glimpses of truth. When the meditator is wearied in this way he can abandon the enjoyment of different feelings. No matter how enchanting the taste of rapture he is not amused or satisfied by it. He is like a person who sees something beautiful but because he knows its danger, he does not harbour any delight in its beauty. To see impermanence, unsatisfactoriness and no-self is to see the danger in beautiful things and to destroy the power or influence of their beauty completely. In this way the meditator can establish weariness firmly without regressing into a state of enjoying rapture all the time so long as he is able to clearly contemplate or actually experience the rapture as being impermanent, etc.

Anupassanā—Fifth Stage. In this stage the meditator becomes dispassionate (*Virajjati*) with regard to feelings, and in so doing he abandons passion.

Here the meaning of the word "passion" should be understood clearly. The Pali term for it is *rāga* or *sārāga*, which implies love for anything which is strongly ingrained in one's nature. *Rāga* or passion

in this sense is not limited only to sensuality but can be used for attachment to wealth and possessions and immaterial things such as name, fame and even merit. One should observe here the difficulty of rendering words from one language to another; sometimes the linguistic barriers cause confusion about *Dhamma*. In this case, passion refers to passion for feeling, that is for rapture (*pīti*) itself. This passion for feeling includes *Dhamma-pīti* (delight in the Dhamma) and even delight in the *Jhāna* itself. The reason for this is that no matter what kind of *pīti* it is, there is a grasping by the mind. The mind becomes coloured in the same way as a fast dye holds strongly in the cloth. This explanation fits the literal meaning of the word *rāga*, which is derived from the root "*Raj*" meaning "to dye" or "to colour" but is translated as "passion". All pleasant feelings, when grasped as such, can be the basis for passion, and are all to be overcome through practice.

The wording "in doing so he abandons passion" shows a cause and effect relationship: the weariness causes the passion to abate. This process (the wearying followed by the abating of passion) is

closely related in time because it is something belonging to the mind, the nature of which is incomparably quick. For example, suppose a person happens to touch fire. The moment he touches that fire, he fears and no longer wishes to touch, and the hand is released. The arising of fear of fire is comparable to the arising of weariness. One is hardly cognizant of the process; it functions automatically and the hand is released from the fire at great speed. This kind of operation on a physical or nervous level has its counterpart in the deeper level of the mind.

As a rule contemplation (*anupassanā*—lit. watching closely) in this fifth Stage involves the same things as in the previous stages: the feeling together with its characteristics of impermanence, unsatisfactoriness and no-self is manifest but is being put aside. This point fits in with the allegory of the person who has put that fire aside, and it is clearly manifest as being put aside. Here the meditator experiences rapture, taking it as fire which is put aside, as it were. For him rapture is just an ordinary natural phenomenon, he no longer has any passion for it, that is what is meant by abatement of passion for feelings. The meditator is now one who has

abandoned passion for feelings; although we speak of him as one "experiencing rapture", this rapture has been put aside.

Anupassanā — Sixth Stage. In this stage the meditator puts an end (*nirodheti*) to the feelings and does not arouse them, and in doing so, he abandons arousing (*samudaya*).

The wording "he puts an end to the feelings" has a specific import. Precisely, it implies putting an end to the "meaningfulness" or "worth" of the feelings and thereby rendering the feelings worthless, meaningless, strengthless and powerless to create further suffering. This is the meaning of "putting an end (*nirodha*) to feelings". Even though there may again arise impression (*phassa*) or feeling, the meditator has lost all passion for them, no matter how often they may arise. When impressions and feelings have no meaning, there is no more grasping and so no suffering arises. That is the implication of the short expression "he puts an end to the feelings".

Rapture or feeling is clearly manifested to him, as it were, like fire which has cooled down and is no

longer dangerous. Thus in this stage the meditator dwells experiencing rapture which has been put an end to in the sense of being cooled down. The cessation of these feelings amounts to the abandoning of the arising of the fire of suffering by the power of mindfulness (*sati*) and the knowledge (*ñāṇa*) of the three characteristics of existence. A used coal can no longer burn into fire... thus the meditator dwells "experiencing rapture" but here rapture is cooled down.

Anupassanā — Seventh Stage. In this stage the meditator renounces (*paṭinissajjati*) the feelings; he does not cling to them, and in doing so he abandons clinging (*ādāna*).

This is the last stage of contemplating or experiencing rapture. In short, now that the fire has been completely extinguished, there is nothing of concern. Rapture or feeling has been completely rejected or negated. It is given up and returned (*paṭinissaṭṭha*) — given back to nature, as it were. The meditator is not deluded as before or harbouring passion; everything connected with feeling has reverted to nature.

Valuing or clinging to anything whatsoever happens for one reason: a pleasant feeling (*sukha-vedanā*) arises. When this pleasant feeling is taken by itself, it is rendered meaningless or rejected. As a result all other things are said to be thrown away. Therefore the short expression "he renounces feelings" has a wide connotation covering the renunciation of each and everything. This renunciation is the complete and final renunciation. All religious aspiration, the holy life (*brahmacariya*), culminates in this complete renunciation (*paṭinissagga*) of everything.

Nevertheless, the practice must be continued further because the practice of this step is concerned with the person whose different virtues and mental faculties are not yet fully ripened, whose insight into impermanence, unsatisfactoriness and no-self is not yet deep enough, whose experience of weariness (*nibbidā*) and dispassion (*virāga*) is not yet fully developed, i.e., the practice has still to be gone through with painstaking care. Therefore, it is said, in this sense, that the meditator "trains himself" or that "he contemplates the feeling".

These seven stages of *Anupassanā* are the ways of contemplating the feelings with mindfulness and knowledge or "the ways of experiencing rapture while breathing in and out". This way of practice is called development (*bhāvanā*).

What Is Bhāvanā?

The literal translation of *Bhāvanā is* "inducing" or "developing", but in practice one can use the term *Bhāvanā*[3] only if there is an actual "inducing" or "developing" as such. Therefore a term like *Satipaṭṭhāna-bhāvanā* is meaningful only if a "development" by means of mindfulness does take place as in the case of contemplating rapture or feeling in seven ways (as previously mentioned). As far as *ānāpānasati* is concerned *Bhāvanā*, is defined in four ways:

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3. The term "*Bhāvanā*" is commonly used to mean merely sitting in meditation, irrespective of whether or not there is any actual inner development taking place.

(1) In the sense of **non-excess of the mental states arisen** through contemplation by means of mindfulness. *Bhāvanā* is something manifest and therefore we speak of this *Satipaṭṭhāna* (establishment of mindfulness) as having arisen or being developed (hence the full name *Satipaṭṭhāna-bhāvanā*).[4]

(2) We speak, of *Bhāvanā* in the sense of the arising of mental states such as Faculties (*indriya*), which collectively perform the same function and bring about the same result.

(3) There is *Bhāvanā* in the sense that the practice gives rise to energy which is in conformity with different mental states including the Faculties.

(4) There is *Bhāvanā* in the sense that the mind is involved in going through the experience.

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4. "This *Satipaṭṭhāna*" may refer to any of the four, e.g., *Kāyekāyā-nupassanā-satipaṭṭhāna-bhāvanā* (the Development of the Establishment (Foundation) of Mindfulness Consisting in Contemplation of the Body in the Body).

Explanation of the Four Ways of *Bhāvanā*:

(1) Expressed in simple language, success in any worthwhile undertaking depends on inducing the necessary conditions by means of an appropriate action which has due measure. All these conditions which have been induced, must be co-ordinated harmoniously; no single one of them should be either in excess or deficient, nor should they encroach one upon another. For example, in the practice penetrative insight into impermanence should be in full accord with, or lead to, insight into suffering. Likewise, penetration of suffering should conform, or lead to, penetration of no-self. Penetration of no-self, again, should lead to weariness, arousing dispassion, etc. When the practice follows this course, we can call it *Bhāvanā*, development or progress.[5]

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5. The term *Bhāvanā* has many shades of meanings: development, progress, cultivation, culture, application, etc. The word "development" is the one most commonly used for mental culture through meditation.

Here is an example from modern affairs: In the world of today, the whole progress in science, technology and so on is not being appropriately and adequately used for peaceful purposes, which means all the so-called progress in different fields leads increasingly to more turmoil and trouble rather than to peace. This shows that some things are in excess and others deficient; some things are over-rated while others are under-rated, and, consequently, no real *bhāvanā* or progress is achieved.

(2) The second definition of *bhāvanā* implies a harmonious co-ordination of different things serving as instruments. People must join hands to work for one single desirable aim otherwise progress cannot be achieved. In the world of today the tens and hundreds of branches of knowledge are not co-ordinated for one single aim: peace. They are put to use for various purposes according to men's vested interests; often those interests do not include peace.

In the process of mental training, all the mental states (*dhammas*) which are instrumental in

practice must be applied in a co-ordinated manner to bring about at a given moment the very result required, otherwise no *bhāvanā* is realised. The Buddha has pointed out: The way of practice concerned with material gain is one thing and the way of practice leading to *Nibbāna* is something quite different (*aññā hi lābhūpanīsā aññā nibbānagāminī*). This means that action may be the same but motivation quite different. For instance, strict observation of the precepts may be activated either by mere desired material gain or by a genuine will to overcome egocentricity. The former is for the sake of material gain, the latter is aimed at *Nibbāna*, despite the fact that the line of conduct is the same in both cases. This same principle applies to right effort, the practice of concentration and insight or of any other action. If all these ways of practice are not carried out honestly and harmoniously, then an influx of craving or wrong views will result and the *bhāvanā* of this (fifth) Stage will not manifest. All the parts of a vehicle must work together for one purpose.

(3) The third, definition of *bhāvanā* means that all different kinds of effort are directed towards

sustaining energy in order to bring about the desired results and to use everything at hand as instruments performing their respective duties. This is *bhāvanā*. Whether *bhāvanā* is taken in the sense of "inducing" or "developing", it must be able to control directly all efforts or energy for the desired aim. In the subtle practice of *Dhamma* all effort must be controlled strictly and with right understanding, otherwise the practice, from the first step, will bear no fruit. If there is sufficient knowledge of the principles of practice but the knowledge of the application, of those principles is lacking, or if they are applied wrongly, then nothing will bear fruit. This third definition of *bhāvanā* should be kept in mind.

(4) The fourth definition is that "the mind is involved very much in practice, therefore it is called *bhāvanā*", i.e. the mind is practising constantly until it reaches a certain climax while experiencing some fruits of the practice. Such fruits, however, belong to the initial steps and only form the basis for further practice.

To conclude: if one devotes one's time and energy exclusively to one single object, the practice can be

called *bhāvanā*. In the process of mental training, the word "practice" has a wide connotation. It implies all necessary effort to be made in the beginning, in the middle and in the end. The beginning stage includes both the preliminary actions (pp. 14–48) and the undertaking of the actual practice. In the middle stage previous achievements have to be maintained and stabilized until, in the end, one strives for the final goal.

The task of entering and dwelling in the different absorptions (*jhānas*), the emerging from them and then reviewing them is quite difficult for the mind. Attainments can very easily be lost, so mental training concerning the absorptions must be done with the utmost thoroughness, a task not to be compared with any physical work.

The fourth definition of *bhāvanā* also means that if there is genuine *bhāvanā* the mind is pleased to continue the practice and to practise with such a familiarity that the meditator heads higher and higher.

Summing up the whole theme: *bhāvanā* signifies successful practice which depends upon these facts: one is able to induce various mental states in a proper and harmonious way, one has control over the devices in order to co-ordinate them for a single purpose in meditation, one has the necessary energy at one's disposal to control the devices and that one practises sincerely and wholeheartedly throughout. The meditator should remember these four points.

DHAMMA-SAMODHĀNA

Inducing various Mental States during Bhāvanā

While the meditator is experiencing rapture which has arisen through the sixteen ways and is being maintained by means of development (*bhāvanā*) in the fourfold sense, he is said to have completely developed the fifth Stage. Thanks to this full development, he induces various mental states as will be explained.

The Pali word here rendered “induces” is *samodhā-neti*, lit. “brings together”, or “gathers”. Here it means the coming together of different mental states by the power of the practice. It is that kind of practice which, after having been properly and successfully carried out, brings together all natural results of the training. Generally it is said that the meditator brings them together and even that he attains to this and that. All this is a convention way of speaking. Further, this very “bringing together” of various mental states is the attainment of *dhammas* or realizing the dhammas within oneself. When one correctly understands this point, he will not be apt to have a wrong view of the nature of attainment or realization. For instance, through misunderstanding some may believe that some attainments through the practice of concentration were holy, miraculous or magical and cling to this erroneous belief (*sīlabbata-parāmāsa*).

While experiencing rapture, as already discussed in detail, the meditator induces certain *dhammas*:

The Five Mental Faculties, the Five Mental Powers, the Seven Factors of Enlightenment, the Eightfold Path and twenty-nine other mental objects.

The arising of each of these different groups of *dhammas* involves two more actions: knowing the domain (*gocara*) of each of the various *dhammas* and penetrating the “benefit” of the calm (*samattha*) concerned with those *dhammas*. The two actions are exemplified in the following.

(i) **Inducing the Faculties** (*indriya*). Here the meditator maintains one-pointedness of mind by means of long in- and out-breathing until there arises the feeling of rapture. Having induced this feeling he contemplates it as impermanent, unsatisfactory, no-self and finally he knows the causes of its arising, manifesting and ceasing to be. Now one has to consider what has arisen during the practice.

The meditator gathers or induces the Five Faculties, namely, Faith, Energy, Mindfulness, Concentration and Wisdom. They are well known by name but the meditator comes to know by personal experience what these faculties really mean.

The true nature of each Faculty is this: When the meditator has induced rapture and contemplates it

as impermanent, etc. there arises in him faith, which is firmly established. All doubts with regard to the practice are resolved.[6] No longer does he need to have faith in another person for he, himself, is experiencing them. Notice, too, that this kind of faith has just arisen since it cannot possibly be present prior to undergoing experience. This is the genuine Faculty of Faith (*saddhindriya*), for it is a personal experience. Obviously, if the contemplating of different kinds of rapture is not practised correctly the Faculty of Faith may not arise at all. In this Stage other factors are involved at the same time. The factor through which the meditator vigorously and perseveringly exerts[7] his mind in contemplating rapture until he finally succeeds is no other than the Faculty of Energy (*viriyindriya*): It is present all the time while the meditator is contemplating the feelings.

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6. The Faculty of Faith in the sense of resolving (*adhimokkhaṭṭhena saddhindriya*).

7. The Faculty of Energy in the sense of exertion (*paggahaṭṭhena viriyindriya*).

The factor through which he can be firmly established[8] in contemplating rapture is a quality of mind called the Faculty of Mindfulness (*satindriya*). That quality of mind, too, is present at the same time. Non-distraction[9] or non-oscillation of mind which must, of course, be present at that time, is none other than the Faculty of Concentration (*samādhindriya*). The "seeing"[10] or knowledge resulting from the contemplating of feelings as impermanent, etc. is the Faculty of Wisdom (*paññindriya*) itself.

All these Five Faculties are present at the same time in right proportion and in harmony. They all result from the act of contemplating the feelings. So it can be said the contemplation of rapture simultaneously gives rise to the Five Faculties.

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8. The Faculty of Mindfulness in the sense of establishment (*upaṭṭhānaṭṭhena satindriya*).
9. The Faculty of Concentration in the sense of non-distraction (*avikkhepaṭṭhena samādhindriya*).
10. The Faculty of wisdom in the sense of seeing (*dassanaṭṭhena paññindriya*).

The bringing together of the Faculties in full also involves the knowing of their domain (*gocara*)[11] or object, for the Faculties become manifest in full only if the meditator clearly knows their object. In the case of the fifth Stage, their object is rapture or feeling itself. As for the other stages of practice, objects differ depending on the corresponding causes giving rise to the Faculties. The so-called domain is, in fact, the very object of contemplation on the basis of which the Faculties are induced.

It is not without reason that the “object” is referred to as “domain”. The term “domain” throws light on the meaning of “object” from another angle: it is a domain in the figurative sense. This is the place in which the mind endowed with its attributes (i.e., the Five Faculties) moves about. To see the Faculties in reality includes seeing their basis of operation. When we look at a cow or any number of cows we see not only cows but also the place where they are grazing.

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11. *Gocara* lit. means “a cow’s grazing posture.”

This simile applies to the Faculties and their Domain. All this goes to show that real understanding is beyond the scope of ordinary knowledge, which cannot make feelings such as rapture truly manifest in the mind so that the Faculties as realities have no basis of arising. Only with practice can there be real understanding.

Penetrating the Benefit of Calm

When the mind has induced the Faculties and knows their domain, it also penetrates them in the sense of being soaked in them, or it fully experiences fruits thereof. This is called "penetrating *samattha*". *Samattha* implies the fruits or benefit connected with the gathering of, or inducing, different mental states (*dhammas*). The term *attha*, benefit, here has a fourfold significance: it is blameless, undefiled, purified and excellent.

Anything which has these four characteristics (of being blameless, etc.) is called "benefit" in the language of meditation practice. As for the word *sama*, it literally means evenness or calmness and

has a fourfold significance. It is the establishment of the object on which the mind is fixed,[12] it is the non-distraction of mind,[13] it is the resolution of mind[14] through which the object is rendered manifest; it is the purification of mind.[15] Any benefit, which here refers to calmness itself, having these four characteristics, is called *samattha* (the benefit of calm).[16] At the time of bringing together the Faculties the

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12. *ārammaṇassa upaṭṭhānaṃ.*
13. *cittassa avikkhepo.*
14. *cittassa adhiṭṭhānaṃ.*
15. *cittassa vodānaṃ.*
16. To put it simply, the mind is called calm (or even) because at that time (1) the object is well-established, which is the mark of calmness of the mind. (2) the mind is not distracted. (3) the mind is resolute. (4) the mind is pure. Now that the mind is pure in the four senses there is something meaningful because this calmness of mind is blameless, purified and excellent. Thus samattha implies calmness in four ways with fourfold benefit. (Trans.)

meditator, besides knowing their domain, must also penetrate the *samattha*. It is only when *samattha* is penetrated that the act of bringing together of the Faculties is accomplished in the truest sense of the word. This accomplishment is the criterion for the successful practice of this Stage, as far as Faculties are concerned. If the different Faculties are not actually experienced thoroughly, then they are mere names, nothing else.

All that has been said about the bringing together (*samodhāna*) of the Faculties so far can be summed up as follows:

(1) All the Faculties, performing their respective functions to the full, are manifest.

(2) The domain, or the object, of the Faculties is clearly seen.

(3) The bringing together of the Faculties goes together with "being soaked" in the benefit or the fruition.

These three characteristics serve as the criterion of success in realizing all the different groups of

mental states. Even if we simply say "he has practised the *dhamma* and has given rise to the faculties" or just "he has brought together the faculties", it is understood that all the three characteristics are involved. In all cases, no matter whether it is the bringing together of the Five Powers or the Seven Factors of Enlightenment or the Eightfold Path or the remaining twenty-nine mental objects, the same principle holds good: the corresponding groups of mental states are induced; their domain or object is clearly apprehended and their *samattha* (benefit of calm) is fully penetrated.

(ii) **Inducing the Five Powers** (*bala*). The Powers have the same names as the respective Faculties: Faith, Energy, Mindfulness, Concentration and Wisdom, but they have a different function. The Pali word for "Faculty" is *Indriya*, which literally means "head" or "chief" in performing the function implied by its name. The Pali term *Bala* means power in the sense of power to fight or resist undesirable states of mind. When Faith (*saddhā*) functions as head or chief in the act of believing (i.e., leading one to have a correct and firm belief), it is termed the Faculty of Faith. When Faith fights or

resists doubt and uncertainty,[17] it is called the Power of Faith (*saddhā-bala*). In the practice of *ānāpānasati* the Powers arise side by side with the Faculties. The Power of Energy (*viriya-bala*) fights and resists laziness[18]; the Power of Mindfulness fights negligence[19]; the Power of Concentration fights agitation[20]; and Wisdom is called the Power of Wisdom because it fights ignorance[21].

All this clearly shows that what are called Powers do have a different meaning and are not identical with the Faculties. These mental attributes, i.e., Powers and Faculties, are compared to a king who can suppress his enemies. The monarch has two virtues, then—he is king and therefore superior to his subjects; which can be compared to the Indriya or Faculty; and the fact that he can suppress or

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17. *assaddhiya*, lit. incredulity, faithlessness or disbelief.
18. *kosajja*.
19. *pamāda*.
20. *uddhacca*.
21. *avijjā*.

destroy the enemy at any time, is the virtue of a man of power, comparable to the Bala or Power. All the five mental attributes, i.e., Faith, etc., have likewise two virtues: each of them is an Indriya when viewed as head or chief in performing its particular function and a Bala when viewed as a fighter of defilements without wavering in the face of faithlessness, laziness, etc., as explained above.

This point makes it clear that any virtue or *dhamma* we possess must be powerful enough to fight its opposite. The proverbial Thai expression "head flooded with knowledge, unable to find a way out" indicates not knowing truly, which corresponds to the lack of both faculty and power. If a person were to know truly but still be unable to help himself, then it would mean he had the faculty of knowledge but not power. The knowledge is to be regarded neither as faculty nor as a power, if the person has no control over himself, because that knowledge does not "*head*" into infusing "*power*" into that person to practise. An idle person may, day after day, think over the ills of laziness in all detail and yet never act upon it. In that case to say that he has the faculty of knowledge but no power is just not correct. His knowledge or wisdom

cannot be accredited as faculty, for it fails to induce the power of energy. Since his wisdom is ineffective, neither faculty nor power is to be found within him, even though he is skilled in thinking like a philosopher or a learned man.

Whether it is a question of success in worldly affairs or in the practice of the Dhamma, one should understand the characteristics of both the Faculties and the Powers. To sum up: one must have faith to destroy superstitious beliefs completely; one must have strong perseverance which is guided by reason and mature understanding to destroy indolence and feebleness; one must be endowed with mindfulness in the sense of recollecting in time the correct principles; one's mind must be concentrated, clear and alert to the extent that it can overcome agitation, restlessness and torpor, and finally one should know what should be known. Sound judgment must be developed on sound reasoning until one sees within oneself, things as they really are without wrong understanding or wrong views.

Only when one has developed these virtues can one be called a true follower of the Buddha, the great,

the powerful, that is, one who being perfected in Faculties and Powers was truly able to conquer the enemy of defilements.

In the case of experiencing rapture or feelings by way of penetrating them as impermanent, etc., both the Faculties and the Powers are in full strength: the Faculty of Faith is present in its capacity as a Power. It is powerful enough to effectively destroy disbelief, unwillingness to believe, wrong belief, and what is unworthy or undeserving of belief. When the meditator has clearly seen impermanence, unsatisfactoriness and no-self there arises in him faith and belief in the Buddha: that the Buddha spoke the Truth, that things are exactly as He explained them, that "I myself believe the same way and there is no more any possibility for me of believing otherwise." He has no doubt that the Buddha attained Perfect Enlightenment, that people have to rely on this kind of enlightened faith to overcome suffering. The same principle applies in the case of energy: when he clearly sees impermanence, etc., the Power of Energy is in action to the full, it is sharp, strong and decisive. While experiencing rapture he is not just contemplating impermanence passively but is fully

active, energy is fully involved. Mindfulness is so full of power that at the time (of experiencing rapture) the meditator is not intoxicated by forms, sounds, smells, tastes, tangible objects, is not intoxicated by life, the world and, finally, by the Cycle of Becoming (*vaṭṭa-saṃsāra*). This shows how the Power of Mindfulness, resulting from penetrating feelings as impermanent, etc., is effective and results in full awareness. The remaining two attributes, namely, Concentration and Wisdom also function as powers in the same way as the first three.

In conclusion one should not forget that while inducing the Five Powers their domain must be known and *samattha* must be penetrated in the same way as we discussed at length while dealing with the Faculties.

(iii) **Inducing the Factors of Enlightenment** (*sambojjhaṇga*). The Factors of Enlightenment are induced at the same time as experiencing rapture or feelings together with the Faculties and Powers.

The Factors of Enlightenment are seven in number (see pp. 233–248). Here we again find the terms

Mindfulness, Energy and Concentration as found in the groups of Faculties and Powers. As for Faith and Wisdom, they are included in the Investigation of States (*dhamma-vicaya*). Such being the case, it can be said further that the Seven Factors of Enlightenment are the dhammas which fall into the same category as those which are termed Faculties and Powers. The only difference is that they are considered as functioning in another way, that is, as factors which lead to Enlightenment.

While experiencing rapture the mind is endowed with the following characteristics:

(1) The mind contemplates[22] rapture as an object and is established continuously, from moment to moment—this is called the characteristic of the Enlightenment-Factor of Mindfulness (*sati-sambojjhaṅga*).

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22. The Enlightenment-Factor of Mindfulness in the sense of establishment (*upaṭṭhānaṭṭhena sati-sambojjhaṅga*).

(2) The mind thoroughly examines[23] different mental states in different ways, e.g., it contemplates them as being impermanent, etc., it examines them as to what is worthy of belief, what should be known, and so on. This is the characteristic of the Enlightenment-Factor of Investigation of States (*dhamma-vicaya-sambojjhaṅaga*).

(3) The mind maintains exertion[24] all the time in order to continue experiencing rapture — this is the Enlightenment-Factor of Energy (*viriya-sambojjhaṅga*).

(4) The mind is endowed with Pervasive Joy[25] and is saturated with the practice and thereby enhances energy, calms down restlessness, etc. This is the characteristic of the Enlightenment-Factor of Joy (*pīti-sambojjhaṅga*).

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23. The Enlightenment-Factor of Investigation of States in the sense of examination (*pavicayaṭṭhena dhammavicaya-sambojjhaṅga*).

24. The Enlightenment-Factor of Energy in the sense of exertion (*paggahaṭṭhena viriya-sambojjhaṅga*).

25. The Enlightenment-Factor of Joy in the sense of pervasion (*pharaṇaṭṭhena pīti-sambojjhaṅga*).

(5) The mind is calm[26] because it has completely calmed down agitation, restlessness, craving, thirst, fear, etc., which are hindrances in attaining the Dhamma. This is the characteristic of the Enlightenment-Factor of Tranquillity (*passaddhi-sambojjhaṅga*).

(6) The mind is firm, quiet and pure and non-distracted[27] when the hindrances have gone. This is the characteristic of the Enlightenment-Factor of Concentration (*samādhi-sambojjhaṅga*).

(7) At the time of experiencing rapture the mind reflects[28] carefully, taking care to be firmly estab-

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26. The Enlightenment-Factor of Tranquillity in the sense of calmness (*upasamaṭṭhena passaddhi-sambojjhaṅga*).

27. The Enlightenment Factor of Concentration in the sense of non-distraction (*avikkhepaṭṭhena samādhi-sambojjhaṅga*).

28. The Enlightenment Factor of Equanimity in the sense of reflection (*paṭisaṅkhānaṭṭhena upekkhā-sambojjhaṅga*).

lished in all the Factors of Enlightenment. This is the Enlightenment Factor of Equanimity (*upekkhā-sambojjhaṅga*), which is ever present until the attainment of Enlightenment.

Anyone who thinks deeply over the essence of the Enlightenment-Factors will realize that they can be used for success in worldly affairs such as education and research. The Factors can be directly applied as principles for making the mind smooth and skilful so that it can function in the most refined way. A properly trained mind has the capacity to work far better than an ordinary person can imagine.

When we take the wording "Enlightenment-Factors" and compare it with the terms Faculties and Powers, we can see from the very wording that they are more directly concerned with enlightenment than are the Faculties or Powers, which are generally in the background. As a matter of fact the characteristics of Enlightenment-Factors are like those of Faculties and Powers; but they are, as it were, in closer vicinity to attaining enlightenment—hence the name Enlightenment-Factors. However, the Faculties, the

Powers and the Enlightenment-Factors are all the same in essence, but the Enlightenment-Factors are at a more subtle level.

Like the Faculties, the Enlightenment-Factors must be clearly comprehended to the extent that their domain is known and *samattha* penetrated. Those interested in the theory of the practice should go back every now and then and study domain and samattha.

As for the meditator, he sees everything within himself when the practice is being carried out properly all the time.

(iv) **Inducing the Eightfold Path**. While the meditator is mindfully breathing in and out and is experiencing rapture in the manner explained above, the Eightfold Path from Right View to Right Concentration — the links of which are generally well-known by name — is induced. Here we shall consider the point how the Eight Factors or Links of the Path are manifest at the time of experiencing rapture or feeling.

While the meditator is breathing in and out with the clear understanding of feeling as being impermanent, unsatisfactory and no-self in the way already discussed in detail, he observes the characteristics or meaning of the Path as follows:

(1) **Right View (*samma-diṭṭhi*)**. At that time he sees[29] the arising, the cause of arising, the cessation and the way leading to cessation. This kind of seeing or knowing is called Right View. On a high level this precisely implies seeing the Four Noble Truths or at least seeing the signs of the Four Noble Truths, namely, Suffering, the Cause of Suffering, the Cessation of Suffering and the Path Leading to the Cessation of Suffering.

(2) **Right Aspiration (*sammā-saṅkappa*)**. At that time there is the focussing[30] on or implanting of

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29. Right view in the sense of seeing (*dassanaṭṭhena sammā-diṭṭhi*).

30. Right Aspiration in the sense of focussing (lit. implanting) (*abhiniropanaṭṭhena sammā-saṅkappa*).

a virtue which is not to be found in the ordinary person in the highest sense, that is, an inclination or resolution to attain *Nibbāna*. Even in the ordinary sense this virtue means at least to be inclined towards freeing oneself completely from sensuous desire, from ill-will towards others and from getting oneself (and others) into trouble. This kind of inclination, too, is something higher than can be expected from an ordinary worldling, it is higher in the sense that it directly leads to the Cessation of Suffering, or *Nibbāna*. Such a state of mind is here called Right Aspiration.

(3) **Right Speech** (***sammā-vācā***). At that time the Mental Factors[31] (*cetasika*) which are particularly concerned with the faculty of speech are

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31. They refer to *vitakka* and *vicāra*, i.e. thought (applied thought) and consideration (sustained thought)—according to the Suttas, and *micchā-vācā-virati*, i.e. Abstinence from wrong speech—according to Abhidhamma (*virati* lit. means abstinence, but it connotes clear conscience or will, *cetanā*, or natural tendency not to do wrong in any circumstances.)

productive of right speech: If the meditator speaks, it is right speech; if he keeps silent his mind keeps to,[32] or is endowed with, the Mental Factors which are potentially right speech. This state of mind comes to the same thing as Right Speech, no matter whether be speaks or not.

(4) **Right Action (*sammā-kammanta*)**. At that time the mind is endowed with the Mental Factor. (*cetasika dhamma*)[33] from which originate[34] the bodily actions which are proper, involving no harm either to the, doer or to others. If this Mental Factor is outwardly manifested, it is right action without any trace whatsoever of misconduct. Such awareness or state of mind is here called Right Action and leads to even more noble actions.

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32. Right Speech in the sense of keeping to (*pariggahaṭṭhena sammā-vācā*).

33. This refers to *micchā-kammanta-virati*, i.e. (The *Will* for) Abstinence from wrong bodily actions.

34. Right Action in the sense of originating (*samuṭṭhātnaṭṭhena sammā-kammanta*).

(5) **Right Livelihood** (***sammā-ājīva***). At that time the meditator is established in the purity[35] of livelihood, that is to say, his necessities of life (*paccaya*) are pure. The feeling of purity concerning livelihood is then so strong that be would rather die than live on things obtained through improper means or resort to *Micchā-ājīva*, wrong livelihood.

This Mental Factor (*cetasika*)[36] or feeling concerning purity of livelihood is here called Right Livelihood whether it is manifested outwardly or not. Therefore, even though the meditator is sitting quietly, he is said to be one having Right Livelihood.

(6) **Right Effort** (***sammā-vāyāma***). At that time there is exerting or maintenance of energy which is applied in the right way. If this effort is manifested outwardly it takes the form of the Four Right Efforts

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35. Right Livelihood in the sense of purifying (*vodānaṭṭhena, sammā-ājīva*)

36. This refers to *Micchā-ājīva-virati*, i.e. Abstinence from wrong livelihood.

(*sammappadhāna*).[37] This phenomenon is also manifested within its full sense: there is striving hard for ending or overcoming suffering. This state of mind here is called Right Effort and it is not important whether others see it or not.

(7) **Right Mindfulness** (***sammā-sati***). At that time *Sati*, mindfulness, is wholly established[38] on the object of feeling and (simultaneously) different objects are contemplated as being impermanent, unsatisfactory and no-self, not to be grasped at, etc. Although *Sati* is divided into the Four Applications or Establishments of Mindfulness (*satipaṭṭhāna*), essentially it has the same meaning as just mentioned. This mindfulness or *sati* in this sense is here called Right Mindfulness.

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37. The effort to avoid (*saṃvara-padhāna*) (ii) the effort to overcome (*pahāna-padhāna*) (iii) the effort to develop (*bhāvanā-padhāna*) (iv) the effort to maintain (*anurakkhaṇa-padhāna*).

38. Right Mindfulness in the sense of establishment (*upaṭṭhānaṭṭhena sammā-sati*).

(8) **Right Concentration (*sammā-samādhi*).** At that time the mind is not distracted[39] in any way and, in addition, its forces are concentrated in the form of Faculties, Powers, Enlightenment-Factors, the first seven Links of the Eightfold Path and the twenty-nine mental states (*dhammas*).

This concentration of all the mental forces is called non-distraction of mind and that is what is meant here by Right Concentration. No matter whether the meditator walks, stands or lies down, the state of Right Concentration is always present, providing he is experiencing rapture.

To sum up the eight Links of the Eightfold Path: Seeing or understanding all the phenomena (*dhammas*) correctly is called *Sammā-Diṭṭhi.*

> Implanting or cultivating the highest virtue is called *Samma-Saṅkappa.*

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39. Right Concentration in the sense of non-distraction (*avikkhepaṭṭhena sammā-samādhi*).

Keeping to (restricting oneself to) only what is right and proper to speak is called *Sammā-Vācā.*

Originating or bringing about actions which directly lead to progress is called *Sammā-Kammanta.*

Purification of livelihood is called *Sammā-Ājiva.*

Exerting energy in the right direction is called *Sammā-Vāyāma.*

Establishing the mind on an object, so that it has a strong foundation (for gaining concentration) is called *Sammā-Sati.*

Non-distraction or an unwavering state of mind is called *Sammā-Samādhi.*

All these characteristics of the Eightfold Path are present at the time when the meditator breathes in and out experiencing rapture in the manner explained above.

If we observe each Link of the Eightfold Path, we shall see that the *dhammas* as grouped under the names Faculties, Powers, etc. are all included in the Path. The terms Mindfulness and Concentration, as appearing in these categories, are identical in each case. Energy is known under the name of Effort. The Faculty or Power of Wisdom has assumed the new designations, Right View plus Right Aspiration, and these two also include Faith. Right Speech, Right Action and Right Livelihood are (in essence) to be included in the Faculty or Power of Energy. The essence of the corresponding *dhammas* in all groups is the same, they are enumerated in different groups according to their several functions. Here the Five Faculties are called the "Factors of the Path" (*Maggaṅga*) because each of them constitutes a way which is unique in directly and quickly putting an end to Suffering. Thus, we can say that any particular *dhamma* can perform various functions and it all depends on us from which angle we view it. The important point is whether or not all the desired characteristics are induced at the time of practice.

Having dealt with the inducing of Faculties, Powers, Enlightenment-Factors and the Eightfold Path, we

shall discuss the remaining twenty-nine kinds of mental-objects, or *mind-objects*, one by one.

THE ATTAINMENT OF THE TWENTY-NINE MENTAL-OBJECTS

Inducing Dhammas. Other *dhammas*, besides the Faculties, etc., also appear while experiencing rapture, although only partially or temporarily. This shows the practice of *ānāpānasati* at the fifth Stage brings about many results. The meditator must know how to discern the various effects—but this discerning is of a theoretical nature. **A man of practice need not know and does not even want to know that there are dozens of dhammas which can be analysed from his practice**. However, the art of observing the different mental-objects (*dhammas*) which arise within the mind is highly important and useful both in the practice and in study in a wider sense. The dhammas, therefore, will be discussed for the sake of progress in the art of observing.

Firstly, the mind penetrates through impermanence, etc., and the arising, manifesting and vanishing of the feeling experienced when it induces mental objects.

The feeling (*vedanā*) is so clearly manifest that it resembles a *nimitta* (sign) such as was manifested in the earlier stages of the practice. The feeling, then, is present as an object (*ārammaṇa*) on the basis of which different dhammas are gathered. So when the mind is clearly experiencing feeling, it can see what changes have taken place in the light of the goal of Cessation of Suffering. The Scriptures list twenty-nine angles from which the mind can view improvements.

(1) At that time five predominant *dhammas* (mental objects), i.e., the Faculties are present as head[40] of all the dhammas. This is called the *Samodhāna*, the bringing together of, the *Indriyas* or Faculties.

(2) At that time there are dhammas of power which the meditator can use to overcome, and remain unwavering[41] in the face of undesirable,

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40. The Faculties in the sense of predominance (*adhipateyyaṭṭhena indriyāni*).

41. The Powers in the sense of non-wavering (*akampiyaṭṭhena balāni*).

negative forces. This is called the *Samodhāna* of *Bala*. *Samodhāna* means the meditator can induce them.

(3) At that time there are *dhammas* which function as the Factors of Awakening or Enlightenment. They are so called because each of them functions as a means or outlet[42] for emerging from the darkness of defilements and the Cycle of Becoming (*vatta-Saṃsāra*), which is suffering. This is called the *Samodhāna* of *Bojjhaṅga* (Enlightenment-Factors).

(4) At that time there is a *dhamma* which serves as the way out of suffering in the sense that it is the cause of bringing about the Noble Path[43] and the light of wisdom. This is called the *Samodhāna* of the Path (*magga*), that is, the Eightfold Path.

(5) At that time the establishment of mindfulness in the sense of recollection[44] reaches the culmi-

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42. The Enlightenment-Factors in the sense of an outlet (*niyyānaṭṭhena bojjhaṅgani*).
43. The Path in the sense of cause (*hetaṭṭhena magga*).
44. The Establishment of Mindfulness in the sense of recollection (*upaṭṭhānaṭṭhena satipaṭṭhāna*).

nating point and is then maintained continuously. This is called the *Samodhāna* of *Satipaṭṭhāna*, the Establishment of Recollection.

(6) At that time there is putting forth of effort in the sense of striving[45] in all its implications, such as courage, exertion, unwillingness to yield, resolution and firmness. This is the *Samodhāna* of *Sammappadhāna* (Right Effort).

(7) At that time the Iddhipādas, which refer to the four dhammas, zeal, energy, will-power and investigation, are present in the sense of an instrument to bring about success[46]. At this Stage these four *dhammas* perform their function on a certain level and are ready to perform their function further. This is called the *Samodhāna* of *Iddhipāda* (the Bases for Accomplishment).

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45. Right Effort in the sense of striving (*padahanaṭṭhena sammappadhāna*).

46. The Bases for Accomplishment in the sense of success (*ijjhanaṭṭhena iddhipāda*).

(8) At that time the *dhamma* which is truth manifests in the sense of reality or the ever present state of being such[47] (*tathā*): The meditator, while experiencing feelings, sees the truth directly. This is called the *samodhāna* of *sacca* (the Truth).

(9) At that time tranquillity is manifest in the sense of non-distraction) in the face of provocations and disturbances from mental hindrances (*nīvaraṇa*) or defilements. The state of mind is illustrated by the simile of a rock. A single piece of rock which is thirty-two spans in the ground, and thirty-two spans above the ground cannot be shaken by wind and storm coming from the four directions. This means that the mind at that time is firm to the utmost without the least wavering. That is called the *samodhāna* of *samatha* (Tranquillity).[48]

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47. Truth in the sense of "being such" (*tathaṭṭhena sacca*). (Here the term *tatha* or *tathā* includes both that which is conditioned and the unconditioned.)

48. Tranquillity in the sense of non-distraction (*avikkhepaṭṭhena samatha*).

(10) At that time the meditator has clear insight through his penetrative vision or eye of wisdom, and light of wisdom (*ñāṇa-cakkhu*, *paññā-obhāsa*). whatever he contemplates,[49] he sees its characteristics as they really are. Especially, he sees that all compound things (*saṅkhāra*) are impermanent, unsatisfactory and no-self and should not be grasped. Eventually, this leads to weariness and dispassion. This is called the *samodhāna* of *vipassanā* (Insight).

(11) At that time tranquillity and insight are integrated making one single nature.[50] When they are not separated they are at their most powerful. In their integration they are termed as *samatha-vipassanā*, tranquillity plus insight not being mutually exclusive. One should be clear here that the three terms; *samatha*, *vipassanā* and *samatha-vipassanā*, do not have the same meanings.

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49. Insight in the sense of contemplation (*anupassanṭṭhena vipassanā*).

50. Tranquillity plus Insight in the sense of single nature (*ekarasaṭṭhena samatha-vipassanā*).

(12) At that time there are *dhammas* united in pairs because of their joint functions such as Mindfulness and Clear Comprehension, Tranquillity and Insight. It can be seen that some basic *dhammas* are coupled with their immediate counterparts, e.g., Mindfulness with Clear Comprehension, Moral Shame with Moral Dread (*hiri-ottappa*), Forbearance with Gentleness (*khanti-soracca*). When the practice reaches its culmination the yoking of pairs likewise reaches its culmination, whereas previously different pairs could not perform their respective functions to the utmost because the counterparts of each pair were in excess of, and dominating, each other. Now, at the time of insight there prevails a state of non-excess[51] of counterparts of respective pairs. The pairs which are most clearly manifest are Faith and Wisdom, Energy and Concentration, Equanimity and One-pointedness. All this is called the *samodhāna* of *yuganaddha* (*yoking*). As two oxen are yoked together to cultivate a field, in the same way dhamma pairs cultivate the mind.

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51. "yoking" (*dhammas in pairs*) in the sense of non-excess (of the counterparts of pairs) (*anativattanaṭṭhena yuganaddha*).

(13) At that time the meditator is established in the Purity of Morality in the sense that, while experiencing feelings, he has restraint,[52] his virtue (*sīla*) is undefiled. To explain, no matter whether one takes *sīla* in the sense of restraint with regard to the disciplinary code,[53] restraint of the senses,[54] purity of livelihoods[55] or morality with regard to the four requisites[56] or otherwise — in all its senses it is found in the one who is just experiencing feeling. This is called the *samodhāna* of *sīla-visuddhi.*

(14) At that time the meditator is established in Purity of Mind, i.e., his mind is free from hindrances (*nīvaraṇa*) by the power of concentration or tranquillity. Purity of mind means that the

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52. Purity of Morality in the sense of restraint (*saṃvaraṭṭhena sīla-visuddhi*).

53. *pātimokkha-saṃvara-sīla.*

54. *indriya-saṃvara-sīla.*

55. *ājīvapārisuddhi-sīla.*

56. *paccaya-sannissita-sīla.*

mind is not distracted[57] or shaken by defilements or hindrances. To put it in other terms, the mind is not carried away by sense-objects (*forms*, *sounds*, *etc.*) under the influence of defilements. This is called the *Samodhāna* of *Citta-visuddhi* (Purity of Mind).

(15) At that time the meditator has Purity of View, which includes Faith. View is said to be impure because one holds that things are not governed by the law of cause and effect, and views the impermanent as permanent, the unsatisfactory as pleasant, no-self as self and the impure as beautiful, something to be enjoyed or adhered to. All such misconceptions, amounting to impurity of view, are otherwise known under such names as "wrong view" (*micchā-diṭṭhi*), "distorted views" (*diṭṭhi-vipallāsa*) and many others. In the fifth Stage — there are three more concerning feeling — the meditator clearly sees impermanence, unsatisfactoriness and no-self; he

57. Purity of the Mind in the sense of non-distraction (*avikkhepaṭṭhena citta-vissuddhi*).

sees[58] that different phenomena are conditioned and themselves condition other things, since all things are subject to the law of cause and effect; he does not consider them as pleasant, gratifying or engaging but becomes at first wearied of those phenomena and then detached from them. It is in this practical sense that View (*diṭṭhi*) is said to be straightened and purified, worthy to be called Right View. This is called the *Samodhāna* of *Diṭṭhi-visuddhi* (Purity of View).

(Henceforth all items are directly concerned only with the fruits of practice as such on a higher level.)

(16) At that time the mind is clean and pure. It is not beclouded because it is free from the touch of hindrances and defilements and is delivered[59] from its fetters. This state is called liberation of mind and since it is actually present at the time it amounts to *Samodhāna of Vimokkha* (Liberation).

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58. Purity of View in the sense of seeing (*dassanaṭṭhena diṭṭhi-visuddhi*).

59. Liberation in the sense of deliverance (*muttaṭṭhena vimokkha*).

(17) At that time the meditator had clear vision which penetrates[60] or pierces through the curtain or cloud that hides the truth. The dark clouds of ignorance and mists of error are dispelled and the light of right understanding emerges instead. What was previously dry, theoretical knowledge is now transformed into knowledge based on practice. Knowledge acquired through listening and reading is transformed into realization; the meditator does not have to believe in others, or even his own speculations based on logical reasoning. This is called *Samodhāna* of *Vijjā* (Clear Vision).

(18) The meditator gives up or relinquishes his hold on things for which he previously harboured attachment. He does not now have craving or any wrong or distorted views about feeling; the mind has given up[61] the defilements or fetters of desire and aversion. The attainment of this state of mind on the

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60. Clear Vision in the sense of penetration (*paṭivedhaṭṭhena vijjā*).

61. Emancipation in the sense of giving up (*pariccāgaṭṭhena vimutti*).

part of the meditator is called the *Samodhāna* of *Vimutti* (Emancipation).

(19) The meditator sees how all different mental states, especially feeling of rapture, fade away. For this to be called *ñāṇa* (knowledge or insight), the seeing of "fading" must be based on clear vision of impermanence, unsatisfactoriness and no-self. All conditioned things, revealing themselves to the meditator as impermanent, etc., are all equally seen as fading away. To put it another way, the meaningfulness of all things lies in the pleasant feelings which are produced by them on different levels—from the most ordinary to the most enchanting or refined. When all feelings are cut-off[62] or rejected (through the meditator having no desire for them),[63] then all things are totally rejected, and this is the purpose of seeing fading away of all conditioned things. The definition of fading away is that all things are clearly seen to arise and then cease be in

62. Knowledge of Fading-away in the sense of cutting off (*samucchedaṭṭhena khaye-ñāṇa*).

63. cp. *Anupassanā*—Seventh Stage at p. 348.

endless alternation, dependent on causes and conditions. As for fading away in the case of feeling (rapture), it should be observed that at the time of contemplating it, at one moment the feeling does not seem to exist for the meditator and the next moment he is absorbed, intoxicated and lost in that feeling, and so on in endless alternation, depending on the conditioning factors of that feeling. Thus, for the meditator in this Stage, this ever-changing feeling is seen to be illusory, as are all conditioned things. This is called the *Samodhāna* of *Khaye-ñāṇa* (Knowledge of Fading-away)

(20) The meditator sees cessation, the non-arising of all conditioned things (*saṅkhāra*) in the sense that, in reality, they have no true existence since they are constantly changing. Through penetration of their illusive nature, he has calmed down[64] the view: "they exist". He has calmed down the habit of identifying the mental states as his "self"—this means he has no attachment for anything as "I" or

64. Knowledge of non-arising in the sense of calming down (*paṭippassaṭṭhena anuppade-ñāṅa*).

"mine". This is called the *Samodhāna* of *Anuppāde-ñāṅa* (the Knowledge of Non-arising).

(21) There arises in the meditator the utmost zeal (*chanda*) for attaining *Dhamma* or *Nibbāna*. Apart from having the meaning of that zeal which is the root-cause[65] of all the dhammas involved in the practice, *chanda* also includes other meanings such as joy in the Dhamma (*dhamma-nandi*) and even delight in the *Dhamma* (*dhamma-rāga*), etc. But in essence, no matter what meaning zeal has, at that time there is the utmost zeal in the *Dhamma* and this is called the *Samodhāna* of *Chanda*.

(22) At that time there is the state of full attention (*manasikāra*), i.e., the meditator truly brings to mind the dhammas, this full attention (*manasikāra*) serving as the soil (*samuṭṭhāna*) for arousing[66] the dhammas. In other words, different dhammas are

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65. Zeal in the sense of root-cause (*mūlaṭṭhena chanda*).

66. Attention in the sense of arousing (*samutthānaṭṭhena manasikāra*).

induced and carefully maintained until they develop. This is called *Samodhāna* of *Manasikāra.*

(23) At that time there is the phenomenon which is characterised as contact of the mind with *dhammas* or conversely, contact of dhammas with the mind— dhammas touch the mind (*dhamma-samphassa*). In short, the term "contact" refers to the inducing[67] of various dhammas in the mind. This is the *Samodhāna* of *Phassa.* (Contact).

(24) There is a state of mind which can be compared to tasting the taste of *dhamma* or which is like eating mental food. This is a kind of feeling (*vedanā*) emerging from dhammas or which has dhammas as its objects (*ārammaṇa*). This feeling is the direct result of the contact of *dhammas* with the mind, which here have taken the form of meeting together.[68]

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67. Contact in the sense of inducing (*samodhānaṭṭhena phassa*).

68. Feeling in the sense of meeting together (*samosaranaṭṭhena vedanā*).

(25) By the power of concentration, which is inseparably wedded to wisdom, the state of steadiness and stillness of mind ranks foremost.[69] It should be noted that concentration here does not mean concentration as in other cases in which it is not so distinct. Here is meant the inducing of the kind of concentration which has its own special meaning like "contact" and "feeling" in items 23 and 24. The reason why concentration here has a special or distinct meaning is that it has, unlike concentration in general, actual *dhammas* as its object or there is in it the true experience of the taste of dhammas. This is called the *Samodhāna* of *Samādhi* (Concentration).

(26) At that time predominance[70] of Mindfulness is manifest. Mindfulness is comparable to a commander-in-chief, who, sitting on his throne, performs his duty of commanding; he alone controls all affairs.

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69. Concentration in the sense of being foremost (*pamukhaṭṭhena samādhi*).

70. Mindfulness (or recollection) in the sense of predominance (*adhipateyyaṭṭheda sati*).

Manifestation of Mindfulness (*sati*) in this spirit of predominance is called the *Samodhāna* of *Sati.*

(27) Clear Comprehension makes a pair with Mindfulness and thus the pair becomes even more significant surpassing[71] mere Mindfulness. This point shows in another way the perfection in performing the function of the *dhammas* which bring about deliverance and means the state of their being higher than mindfulness alone because they are established more firmly without the possibility of their going back or wavering. This is called the *Samodhāna* of *Sati-Sampajañña* (Mindfulness-plus-Clear Comprehension).

(28) There is the state of attainment of the *dhamma* which is the ultimate essence of the Holy Life (*brahmacariya*), the quintessence of all that is essential. This refers to Emancipation (*vimutti*). The Perfect One declared that His Doctrine and Discipline (*dhamma-vinaya*) or the Holy Life that

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71. Mindfulness-plus-Clear Comprehension in the sense of surpassing (*taduttaraṭṭhena sati-sampajañña*).

He has proclaimed, has Emancipation as its essence[72] and not morality, concentration, wisdom or Divine "Knowledge and Vision", etc. (*ñāṇa-dassana*). He compared these things respectively to outer dry bark, bark and sap-wood, all surrounding the core of Emancipation.[73] Therefore, the term *vimutti* in this 28th Item implies reaching the very heart of the holy life which is emancipation — while the term Vimutti in Item 18 refers to emancipation in the sense of the act or rather process of giving up defilement. Thus, the same term *vimutti*[74] is used in both cases, but the implications are different. This is the *Samodhāna* of *Vimutti*.

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72. Emancipation in the sense of essence (*sāraṭṭhena vimutti*) — (cp. M. N. Suttas 29 and 30: gains-honours-fame are compared to branches and foliage; morality to outer dry bark; concentration to bark; Knowledge and Vision to soft wood; and emancipation to pith).

73. cp. M. N. 29, 30.

74. *Vimutti* in Item 18 connotes action, while in Item 28 it connotes fruit, or result, so to say. — author.

(29) At that time the mind is in the state of “diving into” the Deathless, namely *Nibbāna*. *Nibbāna* signifies cessation of suffering or elimination of all ills, which may be only partial or complete but the meaning remains the same: “diving into”[75] the Deathless. This is regarded as the end[76] or culmination of the successful practice of the Dhamma. This fact makes it clear that the deathless state can be experienced even in the early stages of the practice, such as this fifth Stage of *ānāpānasati*. The reason is that the taste which the mind experiences while contemplating feeling is the same as that of Nibbāna — with the exception that at this Stage there is only a glimpse of *Nibbāna*, not the full experience. This is called the *Samodhāna* of *Amatogadha Nibbāna* (the Deathless).

Now to summarize the whole topic of *Samodhāna* (inducing the various *dhammas*): At the time the

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75. *Amata* plus *Ogadha* equals diving into the deathless.

76. Deathless Nibbāna in the sense of end (*pariyosānaṭṭhena amato-gadha nibbāna*).

meditator breathes in and out experiencing or contemplating feeling as impermanent, unsatisfactory and no-self, the mind attains to *dhammas*, i.e. the 29 different mental states as discussed above, or, in other words, all these mental states can then be seen manifested in the mind. This fact shows how interesting it is to penetrate the feeling. One should train oneself in it seriously, no matter how serious the troubles one may have to overcome. Let all those who are interested in practice pay attention to understand feeling closely by means of a more subtle method. We shall now consider this method separately giving it a special treatment since it is an important point of the present Stage of *ānāpānasati*. This method is a distinct and exhaustive method of contemplating feeling.

A Distinct and Exhaustive Method of Contemplating Feeling

To contemplate feeling or watch it closely in different ways throws light on feeling from different angles, that is, the meditator knows what feeling (rapture) is; what its characteristics are; when it arises, how it is related to breathing; what it is object for, what

means are used to contemplate it; what truth is seen in it; what results from seeing that truth. However, the most important point of all is that the meditator must understand how feeling is to be contemplated so as to obtain the full results of practice in the form of bringing together the twenty-nine dhammas. Presently, we shall therefore consider in detail the Distinct and Exhaustive Method of Contemplating Feeling because this method is a kind of *Anupassanā* (watching the feeling closely) and leads to success in *Samodhāna* (bringing together different *dhammas*). Generally speaking, to see the truth of anything means to see that it is impermanent, unsatisfactory and no-self or void and that it is not worth becoming attached to it.

To see the truth of anything in detail we must analyse it with regard to its Arising (*uppāda*), manifestation (*upaṭṭhāna*) and Cessation (*atthaṅgama*) so as to know further (a) what it arises from (b) while manifesting what characteristics are manifest and to what purpose (c) how it ceases to be. We must take into account all these three points. We should also in the same manner consider things which are related to the thing in question. In the case of feeling, there

are two things related to it: perception (*saññā*) and thought (*vitakka*). We have therefore also to discuss the arising, manifesting and ceasing of all three.

Feeling in relation to Saññā and Vitakka

First of all, we shall discuss the point how feeling (*vedanā*) is related to *saññā* and *vitakka*. This relationship is something directly concerned with psychology. When a feeling—whether pleasant or unpleasant—arises one tends to perceive that feeling as such, as an entity or as "my feeling". This is called the arising of *saññā* (perception) in connection with feeling. When perception has thus arisen there arises thinking about it whether good or bad as the case may be. This is called *vitakka*, thought arising in connection with that feeling and that perception.

Now consider that when there is the coming together of all these three things in this way how much more firm they will be: how difficult will be to get rid of them if we are unaware of their combination into a group or to their collective resistance to our practice of contemplation or our efforts to

destroy them. The best way is, therefore, that we should weaken them; first they should be separated as feeling, perception and thought to weaken their power of hiding the truth from us and then considered individually.

(I) Noting Feeling

In the case of feeling, the first of the trio, we know that when there is one-pointedness and non-distraction of mind by means of breathing in and out, rapture, which has here been referred to as a feeling, is clearly manifest. When feeling is thus manifest we should note its arising, momentary manifesting, and ceasing in all their clarity.

(A) Concerning the arising of feeling, we should think in terms of this question: With the arising of what does feeling arise? Conditioned by what, there is the arising of feeling? The answer is — with the arising of, or conditioned by, ignorance, craving, *Kamma* and sense-impression (*phassa*), there is the arising of feeling.

Ignorance (*avijjā*) implies not knowing or knowing wrongly. It is the foundation of all phenomena which are coming into being without exception. We can say ignorance is the very root of all conditioned things (*saṅkhāra*) whatsoever. In this way, we can see that, in the first place, it is ignorance which accounts for feeling. The next point to be considered more closely is: It is because there is ignorance that one is deluded as to the value and meaning of feeling (*vedanā*) and tends to become attached to it — a mere illusion — and grasps it as reality. This is what is meant by the statement that with the arising of ignorance there is the arising of feeling.

The statement that feeling arises from craving (*tanhā*) refers to the mode of conditioning which is closely connected with the preliminary measure.[77] That is, when one desires to experience any kind of feeling, one searches or acts and the desired feeling is induced. As a general rule, it is said "Conditioned by feeling is craving." This means once the feeling has

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77. This means first there is craving to experience a certain kind of feeling and then that feeling is aroused.

arisen,[78] there arise various kinds of desires with regard to it. For example, one has a desire to indulge and maintain that feeling passionately, which, in its turn, has the power to give rise to clinging (*upadāna*). But here we are thinking on different lines, just the opposite, that is, feeling is conditioned by craving. One should understand this point clearly, otherwise one may regard it as a contradiction.

As for the point that feeling, whether desirable or undesirable, is induced by *kamma* (action), this means that fruition (*vipāka*) of past *kamma* plays its part in bringing about feeling.

Finally, the fact that feeling arises from sense impression (*phassa*) points to a mental law, which operates "under one's nose" and is the most immediate cause of the arising of feeling. Most of us know that sense-impression or contact, which is the coming together of the three things, namely, sense-organ, sense-object and consciousness, does result in giving rise to feeling.

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78. This means there is already a certain kind of feeling and afterward craving arises to maintain it.

If we consider the four causes of feeling altogether in their inter-relationship, we can see clearly that feeling results from their joint function—with ignorance as a general basis, craving as motive force giving direction, *kamma*, in its turn, coming in between as supporter and then sense-impression as the immediate condition. When the meditator clearly sees then of course "feeling arises manifestly" that is, to him while breathing in and out, feelings are clearly known as they arise.

(B) The meditator regards the temporary appearance or manifestation (*upaṭṭhāna*) of feelings as impermanent, unsatisfactory and no-self. This contemplation should be developed until it bears fruit, that is, until the meditator knows clearly and directly through the contemplation of impermanence the Manifestation of Dissolution;[79] through the contemplation of unsatisfactoriness

79. *Khayatupaṭṭhāna* (This term can be translated literally in two ways: 1. Appearance or Manifestation of Dissolution, 2. Appearance or Manifestation as Dissolution.).

the Manifestator of Fear;[80] and through the contemplation of no-self the Manifestation of Voidness.[81]

These three things, namely, dissolution, fear and voidness cannot in the least be manifest in the mind of a person who tries to understand impermanence, etc. through the study of Scriptures. They are experienced within the mind directly, and are not just dry facts obtained from books. These experiences cannot be manifest to the person who thinks in a rationalistic manner on the level of philosophy or logic — simply because they are beyond the scope of reasoning — the range of reasoning just cannot reach them. If a person is convinced of impermanence, unsatisfactoriness and no-self merely through his reasoning, that is not enough—we cannot say that the appearance or manifestation — (*upaṭṭhāna*) of feeling is clear to him. In this way we can see that

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80. *Bhayatupaṭṭhāna* (1. Appearance or Manifestation of fear, 2. Appearance or Manifestation as Fear.).

81. *Suññatupaṭṭhāna* (1. Appearance or Manifestation of Voidness, 2. Appearance or Manifestation as Voidness.).

these three things can be manifest only when a person continues contemplating feelings in the right way and thereby gains penetration into impermanence, unsatisfactoriness and no-self—and this penetration is based on the seeing of arising, (momentary) manifestation and cessation of feeling.

The statement that the meditator clearly knows the Manifestation of Dissolution signifies that the meditator is seriously moved (*saṃvega*) to see within himself that all phenomena are dissolving, are ever changing and flowing on indifferently and implacably.

This is not a knowledge of dissolution gained through the intellect or reasoning, it is knowledge gained through realization or actual experience of the taste and perplexity of various things, especially feeling.

As for fear, if is to be understood in the, same way as dissolution above. But here, in the case of fear, it is easier to see that fear as an actual feeling cannot possibly be brought about by intellectual knowledge or reasoning. It arises out of direct experience with things concerned and not otherwise: everybody

knows that a tiger is a fearful animal and every one can have reason to believe that a tiger is a terrifying beast; yet one does not really have fear until one come face to face with such an animal in an isolated place. This is an illustration to show that fear of unsatisfactoriness (*dukkha*) cannot possibly arise through study or philosophical reasoning. It must arise through practising *dhamma*, directly experiencing things with their property of unsatisfactoriness. To sum up: let a person through applying the techniques of practice gradually "look" and "see" and realize the nature of things as they really are, and then he will know for himself authoritatively and unmistakably that while contemplating feeling as unsatisfactory, the Fear in Appearance or Manifestation is seen face to face.

As for the expression "Manifestation of Voidness" which is seen through the contemplation of no-self, it implies that the meditator sees different phenomena as void or empty of all attributes which have their origin either in convention or conception. All conventionalism (*sammuti*) and conceptualisation result from feeling which is dominated by ignorance, craving, etc. This kind of feeling which is over-

powered by craving, etc. cannot in any way lead one to have a “feeling” of voidness. Therefore this kind of feeling merely tends to be a way of thinking in the opposite to voidness — thinking in terms of a self-abiding entity or entities in one form or the other on this and that level — all of which has to do with false notions of attributes and supposed substantiality in one way or the other. People therefore think that different things are not devoid of essence; on the contrary they hold that all phenomena are substantial, solid, something in themselves; valid, having value or worth, more or less as they happen to think of them in their ignorance. Normally people are completely blinded with ignorance and so naturally fail to have a glimpse of voidness, but, whatever they “feel” in their blindness they lay hold of as “something”, as substance. They do not feel they have misconceived it. They feel certain that it is real, that it is reality. For this reason, the entire knowledge derived from the power of reasoning of a common, worldling cannot lead him to voidness but, on the contrary, leads him astray.

We have, therefore, to find out a method to gain power and strength sufficient to counter the current

of attachment of the common worldling and thereby penetrate through each and every thing as being void of "self" or individuality. Here it should be understood that voidness does not mean nihilism or non-existence of material or mental phenomena—it simply signifies that all material and mental phenomena are void of "self" or "soul" and that there is no such thing as subjectivity or objectivity applicable to them or any abiding entity somewhere between or beyond those phenomena. There are material and mental phenomena in a state of flux without "soul" in reality, except "soul" or "souls" which are "such stuff as dreams are made of", resulting from misconceptions based on ignorance, etc., completely covering the voidness of "self". Whenever one is awakened to the illusiveness of "self" by means of practising properly, Manifestation or Appearance of Voidness becomes clear then and there, and there no longer remains any sufferer or suffering or anything dreadful, etc. Thus the question of practice is over suddenly because of the realization of the truth of voidness or *suññatā*.

To sum up, while noting the Manifestation of Feeling one must see it as impermanent to the extent that

there is Manifestation of Dissolution, as unsatisfactory to the extent that there is Manifestation of Fear, and as no-self to the extent that there is Manifestation of Voidness.

(C) With regard to the cessation of feeling the principle is: With the cessation of ignorance there is the cessation of feeling; with the cessation of craving there is the cessation of feeling, with the cessation of *kamma* there is the cessation of feeling, with the cessation of sense-impressions there is the cessation of feeling. The explanation of all this follows the pattern of item (A) but in reverse order. However, one can consider both the items together, throwing light on them from another angle: ignorance being the general basis, it is through its arising or cessation that the other three (craving, etc.) arise or cease respectively. If ignorance is still present, craving, *kamma* and sense-impression or contact must be present as well because it is through ignorance that different things are given value and are liked and clung to, and, as a result, craving arises, *kamma* becomes effective and sense-impression comes into operation. If there is no ignorance, the trio and all

other things are rendered meaningless and powerless. If there is ignorance, then the opposite happens.

To illustrate; if the mind is not dominated by ignorance, even though there is contact between the eye and form, or ear and sound, etc., the contact or sense-impression (*phassa*) will be meaningless. Such being the case, the kind of feeling which is responsible for suffering cannot arise. In this way we can say that it is because of the cessation of ignorance that there is the cessation of sense-impression, and feeling also ceases to be. Craving does not arise and infiltrate, *kamma* is not involved, feeling ceases because they (ignorance, etc.) cease, i.e., they do not come in and get involved in conditioning it.

When the meditator sees directly the different characteristics of feeling together with its conditions of arising and ceasing, to him the feeling is manifest in all its respects.

How feeling arises is clear to him, how it comes to be is manifest, how it ceases to be is manifest—in each case it is manifest clearly. When the feeling is thus manifest to the meditator, he is said to be one con-

templating the feeling of rapture, all the time be breathes in and out with mindfulness. While contemplating or watching feeling closely in this way various dhammas are brought together (*samodhāna*) and become manifest and consequently the meditator thrives continually in contemplation until he gains power to get rid of defilements, which have ignorance as their root, by gradually withering them away. This is the Contemplation of Feeling, (*vedanānupassanā*) in the full sense of the word.

(II) **Noting Perception**

The noting or considering of perception follows the same pattern as that of feeling in all respects, except that in place of sense-impression,[82] feeling is the immediate condition of perception. Feeling is conditioned by ignorance, craving, *kamma* and sense-impression; perception arises from ignorance, craving, *kamma* and feeling itself. Therefore, it follows that perception ceases with the cessation of ignorance, craving, *kamma* and feeling. Just take note that feeling is substituted for sense-impression — all other things being the same.

Contemplation of the “Manifestation of Perception” means to contemplate and closely see its characteristics of impermanence, unsatisfactoriness and no-self, so much so that dissolution, fear and voidness respectively become manifest—as in the case of the Appearance or Manifestation of Feeling. The point to be especially observed here by the meditator is to see whether he is at that time experiencing “feeling” as such, or “feeling in its transitional stage on the way to becoming perception” or perception which is involved in “feeling” through being secretly and inextricably attached to it. All these things hitherto pointed out must be seen clearly as they are, so that both feeling and perception are clearly comprehended.

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82. In the *Paṭisambhidā-magga* the four conditions of perception are identical with feeling. To say that the immediate condition of perception is feeling or sense-impression makes no difference, however, the usage of feeling seems to be more logical and comprehensive. Moreover, Ven. Buddhadāsa’s observation is in line with the suttas. In the Madhupiṇḍika-sutta (Majjhima Nikāya 18) it is said “*…yaṃ vedeti taṃ sañjānāti*”—“that which he feels he perceives”.

(III) **Noting Thought**

Lastly the noting of thought (*vitakka*) is carried out in all respects in the same way as the noting of feeling and perception. The only difference is that the last condition of the tetrad of arising and cessation is perception instead of sense-impression or feeling: thus thought arises and ceases depending on the arising and ceasing of ignorance, craving, kamma and *perception*. In the case of thought, perception is important because it is the direct or immediate condition of inducing thought or thought process.[83] As we observed earlier, it is because one tends to perceive things as self-abiding entities, as "me" or "mine" that the process of thought or thinking is set going. As to how ignorance, craving and *kamma* condition the arising and ceasing of thought, this has the same significance as what was said in the case of feeling and perception, so that there is no need to restate it. Likewise, the contemplating of the (momentary) Appearance or Manifestation of Thought has the same characteris-

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83. cp. "*...yaṃ sañjānāti taṃ vitakketi*" — "that which he perceives he thinks about". ibid. (M.N. 18).

tic as contemplating Manifestation of Feeling or Perception.

As pointed out in the beginning, one should not forget that all three phenomena, feeling, perception and thought, are inter-related, and that to see perception one has to examine feeling, because perception arises with feeling as its ground or in relation to feeling. In the same way, to see thought one has to examine feeling because thought (*vitakka*) is something that arises in relation to feeling, from feeling or in feeling. Perception bears upon feeling and is involved in and with feeling. A thought arises through or in connection with feeling. To know this inter-relationship together with the distinctive characteristics of the three phenomena, as discussed above, is to contemplate feeling exhaustively and entirely.

To recapitulate the whole theme: The first three conditions (*paccaya*), namely, ignorance, craving and *kamma*, are identical in the case of feeling, perception and thought. But the fourth condition differs in each case—feeling, perception and thought have respectively sense-impression, feeling and

perception as their conditions. The reason for this is that sense-impression gives rise to feeling, feeling to perception, and perception in its turn to thought.

In this way one should observe that there are two kinds of conditions, the general ones and specific ones for each of the three phenomena. The practice is said to be accomplished if the meditator meditates or contemplates in such a way that while noting their conditions of arising and falling away he clearly sees their fearfulness and voidness: Contemplating in this way is said to be the accomplishment of practice because, at the time, the arising, manifesting and ceasing of feeling are clearly manifest in the full sense as intended in this fifth Stage of *ānāpānasati*, the guideline of which is "experiencing rapture, I shall breathe out, thus he trains himself; experiencing rapture, I shall breathe in, thus he trains himself".

Thus the Distinctive and Exhaustive Method of Contemplating Feeling can be summarized as seeing the conditional Arising, Manifestation and Cessation of Feeling and the phenomena connected with feeling, i.e., perception and thought.

Chapter XIV

Stage VI

"The guideline of the second step of the second Tetrad or the sixth Stage in the whole of *ānāpānasati* practice is this:

> "Experiencing bliss, I shall breathe out,"
> thus he trains himself;
>
> "Experiencing bliss, I shall breathe in,"
> thus he trains himself.

The explanation of this Stage follows in all respects the pattern of the explanation of the preceding Stage —almost word for word. The only difference is that in this Stage the meditator, instead of rapture, contemplates bliss which is akin to rapture. But since bliss and rapture are both feelings, we can treat them collectively as one. Therefore the explanation of contemplation of bliss is in every way the same as that of contemplation of rapture. The only thing to be taken into consideration is the differences in the specifically individual characteristics of rapture and bliss.

The Pali term for bliss is *sukha*, which refers to two kinds of pleasant feelings, namely, bodily pleasant feeling[84] and mental pleasant feeling.[85] Bodily bliss has its root directly in body or material objects (*rūpa-dhamma*) and it is manifested in the body or through the body for the most part. On the other hand, mental bliss is more refined or subtle than the former and, in the main, it has its root in the mental object (*nāma-dhamma* or *dhammārammaṇa*) and is manifested especially in or through mind. Mental bliss also has a natural effect on the body, inducing physical bliss as a by-product, but one should contemplate the bliss for the most part as it occurs in the mind.

Sukha[86] or bliss as it is experienced during the practice of *ānāpānasati* signifies happiness, which, like rapture, is a factor of *Jhāna*. As such, bliss here refers to happiness which is experienced in mind

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84. *Kāyika-sukha.*

85. *Cetasika-sukha.*

only and which is to be contemplated as a kind of feeling to carry out the practice of the sixth Stage in the same way as the practice of the preceding Stage dealt with rapture as an object.

The Method of Practice

To practise the present Stage the meditator should go back and train himself in contemplating in the fourth Stage in order to clearly note the different Factors of *Jhāna* once again. When all Factors are manifest clearly, he should then concentrate his attention on *sukha* in order to carry out its contemplation which agrees in every way with the contemplation of rapture, explained in the fifth Stage. Here the method of contemplation or practice will be explained briefly by answering the following questions:

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86. The single term "*sukha*" is used both as a factor of *Jhāna* and as an object of contemplation in the sixth Stage, but to show the differences throughout this translation the term happiness has been used for the former and bliss for the latter.

1. What is bliss; what are its characteristics?
2. When does bliss arise?
3. What does it result from? What practice to use in order to induce it?
4. After the arising of bliss, how are knowledge (*ñāṇa*) and mindfulness (*sati*) induced?
5. In what way does the meditator contemplate bliss and what does he abandon or give up thereby.
6. In which sense is the contemplating of bliss *Satipaṭṭhāna-bhāvanā*?
7. While there is gathering together (*Samodhāna*) of different *dhammas* how does he, the meditator, know the domain and penetrate the *Samattha*?
8. What in detail are the groups of *dhammas* which are gathered together?
9. Generally speaking, how many *dhammas* are induced or gathered together in all?
10. What is the distinct and exhaustive method of contemplating the arising, manifesting and cessation of bliss?

The answers will give only the essential points of the method so as to enable one to understand the whole system of practice.

1. Bliss means mental bliss (*cetasika-sukha*); its characteristic is coolness, which directly is the basis for tranquillity (*passaddhi*) or concentration (*samādhi*).

2. Bliss as a feeling in connection with the practice of an *ānāpānasati* can arise right from the very beginning onward to the second Stage, third Stage and develop at its height into full-fledged bliss in the next three Stages: fourth, fifth and sixth (see the details in the explanation of the preceding two Stages, especially the fourth Stage, where it deals with the Factors of *Jhāna*).

3. Bliss arises from applying the mind wisely in any of the sixteen ways connected with breathing in and out—beginning from knowing (*pajānanā*) that the mind is one-pointed right up to realizing what should be realized (*sacchikātabbaṃ sacchikaroto*) by the power of contemplating on breathing in and out. (All the sixteen ways correspond to the sixteen ways for the arising of rapture—see pp. 325–328.)

4. When bliss has thus arisen in any of these sixteen ways it is experienced by the meditator by means

of in and out breathing. Mindfulness, besides functioning as "mindfulness", forms the basis for contemplation that leads to concentration and also comes to function as Insight-Knowledge (*anupassanā-ñāṇa*). Bliss is manifest and serves as object (*ārammaṇa*) of contemplation. On the other hand, mindfulness is manifest as a means of contemplating the object of bliss. The meditator experiences bliss by means of that mindfulness[87] (leading to concentration) and that knowledge (*ñāṇa* leading to insight) (for details see the explanation of the fifth Stage, p. 332).

5. The meditator contemplates bliss as impermanent, unsatisfactory and no-self, and, in doing so, he abandons the perceptions of permanence, pleasure and self respectively. He comes to be weary (of bliss) and, in doing so, he abandons enjoying it; he becomes dispassionate and abandons passion; he puts an end to it and abandons arousing; he renounces bliss and abandons clinging to it (see details in the fifth Stage, pp. 342–348).

6. While the meditator is contemplating bliss as impermanent, etc., that is called *Satipaṭṭhāna-bhāvanā* (development of mindfulness), (i) in the sense of

non-excess of the mental states arisen through contemplation; (ii) in the sense of making faculties, etc. function jointly for the same end through the power of contemplation by means of mindfulness; (iii) in the sense that he is able to give rise to energy which

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87. Because of the following fact, practice of *ānāpānasati* involves both concentration and wisdom: mindfulness serves as a means for contemplating the object in two ways. Firstly, through it an object is contemplated as an "object" or sign (*nimitta*) with the result that one-pointedness or concentration is gained. Secondly, an object is concentrated on by way of penetrating its characteristics of impermanence, etc. with the result that Insight is gained. In the former case, mindfulness is referred to as mindfulness but to the latter case it is referred to as knowledge (*ñāṇa*). These two ways of contemplating an object, however, go together throughout the practice of *ānāpānasati* and especially in Stages 5–16. This is why the expression "by means of that mindfulness and that knowledge that rapture (here, bliss or as the case may be) is experienced" is used in the Scriptures (Paṭisambhidā-magga).

is in conformity with different mental states, including Faculties; (iv) in the sense that he practises intensively over and over again. Thus it is in this fourfold sense that the contemplation of bliss, in the true sense of the word, amounts to *bhāvanā*, development (see Stage v, pp. 350–357 for further details).

7. Development (*bhāvanā*) in its fourfold sense being in full swing, different mental states, such as Faculties and the like, are induced and gathered together. With the very rising or manifestation of those mental states the meditator knows their domain (*gocara*) or object (*ārammaṇa*) and penetrates their *samattha* (benefit of calm) resulting from the gathering together of those mental objects (as explained in Stage v, pp. 362–366).

8. The meditator induces four groups of *dhammas*, namely, the Five Faculties, the Five Powers, the Seven Factors of Enlightenment and the Eight Links of the Path. Each of these groups has its own significance. Each constituent of the four groups has its own specific function in conformity with the whole practice (see Stage v, pp. 359–384).

9. Generally speaking, twenty-nine kinds of *dhammas* or states become manifest by way of gathering together—right from the Faculties up to Nibbāna, the Deathless (see Stage v, pp. 385–404).

10. The distinct and exhaustive method of contemplating bliss means to note the arising, manifesting or appearance and ceasing of bliss together with perception and thought which arise in succession to bliss. In case of arising the meditator notes the condition for arising and ceasing of each of the trio. With regard to appearance, he contemplates and closely sees each of the trio (bliss, perception and thought) as impermanent, unsatisfactory and no-self, so much so that dissolution, fear and voidness respectively become manifest (see Stage v, pp. 410–415).

To sum up, the practice of the sixth Stage of *ānāpānasati* corresponds to the fifth Stage in all respects, the only difference being that in the former the object of contemplation is the feeling of bliss, while in the latter it is the feeling of rapture. The contemplation of bliss has been dealt with separately because bliss is a basis of clinging far stronger than

rapture. For this reason, the result of contemplating bliss is naturally higher than that of contemplating rapture, and, moreover, feeling is thus experienced in its entirety.

STAGE VII

The guideline for practising the seventh Stage of *ānāpānasati* is in the Master's own words:

> "Experiencing the mental-formation,
> I shall breathe out," thus he trains himself;
>
> "Experiencing the mental-formation,
> I shall breathe in," thus he trains himself.

Now the points to be examined are: "What is the mental-formation (*citta-saṅkhāra*)? When, and to whom, does it manifest? In what way is it experienced?"

Here the mental-formation is perception and feeling, which fall into the category of phenomena bound to the mind (*cetasika-dhammā*). Perception and feeling are called the mental-formation because they fabricate or condition (*saṅkharonti*) the mind. In the

two preceding Stages the trio of feeling, perception and thought was dealt with, but in the present Stage only feeling and perception are dealt with by name, and “thought” as such has been left out. The reason is that in the present case thought (*vitakka*) is included in mind (*citta*) itself and does not function as a conditioning factor thereof.

To make the above point more clear: as we observed, feeling is the specific and immediate condition for perception, and perception in its turn is the specific and immediate condition for thought. It follows that thought or thinking, or mind as referred to here, has *both* feeling and perception as its conditions.

As mentioned earlier (STAGE VI, p. 406) with the arising of a feeling there arises perception (*saññā*). *Saññā* has two phases: firstly it is a coming to awareness which involves both recognition and[88] noting the feeling as to what kind of feeling it is. Secondly, after being aware, it is to perceive or misconceive the feeling as an entity, “self” or as “mine” and “me” with the sense of attachment. Perception, in its first phase, refers to perception in the five aggregates

(*pañcakkhandhā*) and arises automatically and naturally each time any of the senses comes into contact with its corresponding object, that is, it does not involve volition (*cetanā*) as yet, so it is neither wholesome (*kusala*) nor unwholesome (*akusala*). Conversely, perception in the second phase is positively a form of defilement (*kilesa*); it is unwholesome because it is rooted in delusion (*moha*); being rooted in delusion (*moha*), it causes one to perform any kind of action, especially mental action (*mano-kamma*), which means to cherish a thought volitionally to act in some way. With the appearance of thinking, mental action is done. The very act of performing the mental action presupposes that the mind has been conditioned through perception and feeling to act that way, whether or not any bodily action (*kāya-kamma*) or verbal action (*vacī-kamma*) is performed.

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88. It is interesting to note that in Thai, *saññā*, like many other Pali terms is translated by using a compound verb. Literally translated, in English the Thai version of the Pali term *saññā* would be "remembering, marking and knowing"—all that will stand for *saññā* for the Thai. This use of compound verbs is a peculiarity of Thai.

It is with action in relation to the mental action that perception and feeling are called “conditions for the mind”, because if there is neither perception nor feeling no thinking or thought can be conceived.

It should be noted here that perception and feeling in the past can also condition the mind in the same way as do perception and feeling in the present at a given moment. All of them are called immediate conditions or root causes for arousing the mind. There are also indirect causes or conditions in the background. By them are meant various forms of perception which serve as supplements in different ways or forms. They are instinctive in nature.

They go under such names as perception of permanence (*nicca-saññā*), perception of pleasure. (*sukha-saññā*), perception of beauty (*subha-saññā*) and the like. These forms of perception are supplementary to, and become blended with, perception of form,[89] of sound,[90] of smell,[91] of taste,[92] etc.,[93]

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89. *rūpa-saññā.*

90. *sadda-saññā.*

which is to perceive or conceive form, etc. as entities as "him", "me", "his", "mine". When the, two kinds of perception (perception of permanence. etc. on the one hand and perception of form, etc. on the other) interact on each other, different ways of thinking or thought come into being. All this shows that all kinds of perception are conditions for the mind (*citta-saṅkhāra*).

Now, a point especially worth noticing is that in the present Stage of *ānāpānasati* perception is placed before feeling. Generally speaking, or in all other cases, feeling is always put before perception; see, for instance, the trio of feeling, perception and thought, as dealt with in the fifth Stage.

The fact that, in the present Stage, perception is before feeling shows that it is the perception itself that is the ultimate condition of mind. If a feeling is free from, or does not involve, perception, i.e., if a

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91. *gandha-saññā.*

92. *rasa-saññā.*

93. (i.e. *phoṭṭhabba-saññā* and *dhamma-saññā*).

feeling does not give rise to perception, the feeling alone cannot condition the mind, as in the case of the feeling of an Arahant.[94]

To sum up, it is only feeling which is connected with perception, or perception which is connected with feeling that can function as a condition for mind. If there is no feeling then perception cannot take place. Hence there is nothing to condition the mind; the same holds true for feeling. The feeling arises but if it does not condition perception, it follows feeling does not condition the mind; on the other hand, if feeling conditions or becomes the condition for the arising of perception, then it does condition the mind. This is the way perception and feeling function in their capacity as the mental-formation (*citta-saṅkhāra*).

In the present Stage feeling is contemplated as being a condition for mind as opposed to the two

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94. He does feel but, his "mind being gone to the unconditioned state" (*visaṅkhara-gataṃ cittaṃ*), creates no more volition, mental action or otherwise.

preceding stages in which feeling was contemplated as such. In the fifth Stage feeling was contemplated in the form of rapture. In the seventh Stage feeling is thoroughly contemplated, or closely watched with respect to its function of at first conditioning perception and thereby finally conditioning the mind. One should clearly understand this difference of contemplation of feeling on different levels, otherwise one is apt to be confused because names are very much alike (such as rapture, bliss, etc.) and the explanation of each Stage is based on common principles following a certain pattern.

We now come to consider the next point; When and to whom does the mental-formation become manifest?

One should clearly observe and grasp the important principle that underlies the whole practice of *ānāpānasati* that the objects to be contemplated in each Stage must be present and manifest to the meditator right from the very beginning up to the stage that he is at present undertaking. As for feeling (which is the object to be contemplated in the

present Stage or Tetrad), we can say that it has apparently been present all the time, right from the first Stage dealing with contemplating the long in- and out-breaths as such up to the present. But when practising the first Stage the meditator gathers his attention and focuses it on the in- and out-breathing as such, rather than contemplating the feeling, which in its initial stage of development is in fact arising at that time as a result of the very act of contemplation: even though the feeling (whether rapture or bliss) in the first Stage is in its developing state, and as such very faint or insignificant—yet it is feeling after all. After the meditator has gone through all the stages contemplating "in- and out-breaths", etc., from the first Stage onwards and has reached this present seventh Stage, he is advised to go back and start contemplating again from the first Stage onwards. But this time, instead of contemplating the breath as such, he is to contemplate the feeling in order to know what the feeling is like in each Stage—from the first Stage to the second, third, fourth and fifth. While contemplating like this he observes that the feeling which is bliss has been developing all the time and is developed fully in the fourth Stage.

With the feeling fully developed in the fourth Stage, the meditator comes to contemplate it all the more intensely in different ways as described in the following two Stages, i.e., the fifth and sixth. When he comes to the seventh Stage he contemplates the feeling as basis for conditioning the mind or as *Māra*, the Tempter, the Evil One, who deludes one into having subtle but strong attachment for the Cycle of Becoming (*vaṭṭa-saṃsāra*).[95]

Having learnt that feeling is actually present in all the stages, let one make no mistake that it is advisable to contemplate feeling in each and every stage. Let it be clear that what has been said above is just to point out that, although feeling is present in each stage, the meditator contemplates differently in each stage. He begins to contemplate long breathing and then gradually contemplates short breathing, the whole body; he calms the breathing, and contem-

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95. Cycle of Becoming here refers to desire for experiencing pleasant feelings again and again and being attached to their taste and thus "becoming" involved in the cyclic arising of the vicious circle of desire, feeling and taste, and so on.

plates the specific feeling of rapture arisen thereby and then bliss as feeling and finally he contemplates feeling as a condition for mind.

When the meditator comes to a stage of practice which deals with training of contemplating feeling as impermanent, unsatisfactory and no-self, he has to go back and start anew the practice from the first Stage and gradually observe feeling in all the following stages up to the stage in which he is training at present (this may be any of the four steps of the second Tetrad). He is to practice in this way so as to see clearly that feeling is impermanent, unsatisfactory and no-self, not only in the first, second and third Stage but I also in the fourth Stage in which the feeling, no matter how lofty and perfect it is, is still impermanent, unsatisfactory and no-self. As he goes on contemplating feeling as impermanent, etc., he comes to be successively more moved (*saṃvega*) in proportion as the feeling becomes more refined and delicate.

When he reaches the fifth and sixth Stages and is wholly bathed in the feeling which is pleasurable at its height, the hard facts of impermanence, unsatisfactoriness and no-self become most clear, that is,

incomparably more clear than in the previous steps of contemplating long breathing, etc. Therefore, in answer to the question "when and to whom does the mental-formation, that is perception and feeling, manifest?", we may say that they arise and become manifest to the practitioner at the time when he trains himself through all the stages while breathing in and out — beginning from the first Stage up to the present seventh Stage. In the first Stage he sees pleasant feeling which is still faint and then after having passed through the third Stage he comes to feeling which is highly developed to the extent that it is accompanied by one-pointedness or concentration of mind (hence firm and steady in the form of happiness. or joy as one of the Factors of *Jhāna*, especially the third *Jhāna* in which it is full-fledged and most clearly manifest. The more the feeling becomes manifest, the clearer it becomes that it is impermanent, unsatisfactory and no-self. Only when the three characteristics become clear can the feeling be said to be seen in the true sense of the word.

To sum up, whether in its general meaning or as the mental-formation (*citta-saṅkhāra*) feeling can become

manifest to the meditator in all stages from the first up to the seventh and even at the time when the three general characteristics of impermanence, etc. are seen.

Henceforth, we shall consider in what way perception and feeling as the mental-formation are experienced.

The guideline, "experiencing the mental-formation" follows the way of practice as in the case of experiencing rapture and bliss as dealt with in the preceding two stages. We can say that the way of practice is almost the same; that is, both feeling and perception are manifest to the meditator as the mental-formation when he applies his mind by means of breathing in and out in sixteen ways, that is, by way of knowing, contemplating, perceiving, clearly seeing, reflecting, deciding mentally, resolving with faith, exerting energy, establishing mindfulness, concentrating the mind, knowing clearly through wisdom, knowing thoroughly through the highest knowledge, fully understanding, abandoning what should be abandoned, developing what should be developed, realizing what should be realized. By

means of breathing in and out he experiences clearly within himself that the feeling apparently joined with perception conditions the mind. It should be noted here that in each phase of applying the mind in sixteen ways feeling is manifest in its function of conditioning the mind — it is the same as in the fifth and sixth Stages.

To sum up, while breathing in and out in whatever stage and in whatever ways, the meditator all the time experiences feeling in its capacity as a condition of mind. As for the characteristics of feeling they have already been mentioned in the fifth Stage.

The next points to be considered are: how mindfulness (*sati*) and knowledge (*ñāṇa*) arise, each performing its function at its height.[96] In what sense the contemplating of feeling is termed *Vedanānupassanā-satipaṭṭhāna-bhāvanā*;[97] how different groups of dhammas such as Faculties,[98] etc., in particular,

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96. see p. 332.

97. see p. 335.

98. see p. 359.

and twenty-nine dhammas[99] in general are gathered together; how the meditator knows the domain (*gocara*) and penetrates the benefit of calm (*samattha*) of those dhammas (see pp. 362–365). All those points were discussed in the last part of the fifth Stage.

Thus the whole theme of the seventh Stage is exactly the same as explained in the fifth and sixth Stages in the method of practice. The only point which differs is, of course, that in the present Stage the meditator, instead of merely contemplating what or how the feeling is, contemplates how feeling together with perception conditions the mind.

Stage VIII

The guideline for practising the eighth Stage is:

> "Calming the mental-formation, I shall
> breathe out," thus he trains himself;

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99. see p. 385.

> “Calming the mental-formation, I shall breathe in;” thus he trains himself.

The thing to be considered is the way of “calming the mental-formation”, for the rest in this Stage is the same as explained in other Stages (especially the three preceding Stages).

Calming the mental-formation (*citta-saṅkhāra*) is connected with calming the bodily-formation (*kāya-saṅkhāra*) which means breathing. It is therefore advisable that the meditator wisely calm his breathing in order to calm perception and feeling, the twin conditions of mind. He should resort to the calming of breathing if he is overwhelmed by the force of perception and feeling and is thereby lost in any kind of thinking (*vitakka*), even if it be wholesome (*kusala*). As the coarse breathing is gradually calmed down so is the force of perception and feeling calmed down in proportion, and. consequently the thinking of thought calms down also. Such is in general the basic skilful meant (*upāya*) for calming the mental-formation.

Further hints on the method of practice: let the meditator note, and focus his attention on, the intensity of the perception and feeling taking the intensity itself as the object or sign (*nimitta*) of his contemplation. He should clearly note in the beginning how intensive perception and feeling really are and how, afterwards, they tend to become successively more calm or feeble as he gradually controls his breathing, rendering it successively more subtle and delicate.

Let it be clear that, as a rule, along with the controlling of the breathing, the perception and feeling are are controlled automatically. If one can control the breathing (making it gradually more calm) one naturally is able to weaken the intensity or force of perception and feeling. It should be remembered, however, that in this Stage the meditator does not contemplate the breathing, which is now being gradually calmed down, as the object, instead, he takes as the object of contemplation the very perception and feeling, which are gradually being calmed through the calming of the breathing. Thus the meditator trains himself in calming of the mental-formation.

The important principle is: the finer the breathing, the calmer are perception and feeling and, as a result, the more calm and non-distracted the mind becomes. On the principle that the mind reaches non-distraction because perception and feeling are calmed down — or on the principle that the mind reaches non-distraction because perception and feeling are contemplated as the object — we can say the meditator takes as object the feeling itself, which is the immediate mental condition (*citta-saṅkhāra*) and which is now calming down gradually. Thus the breathing in and out is present quite clearly; mindfulness is fully established on the feeling which is slowly calming down with the calming of the breathing; and, as a result of all this, the mind is fully concentrated or one-pointed and collected.

In this way mindfulness and concentration are perfected through the contemplation of the mental conditions of perception and feeling.

As for insight-knowledge (*anupassanā* or *ñāṇa*) in connection with this Stage of *ānāpānasati*, the meditator sees the feeling which is calming down as being the mental formation which is impermanent,

unsatisfactory and no-self. In doing so, he eventually abandons the perceptions (*saññā*) of permanence, pleasure and self or soul respectively. This is both insight knowledge (*anupassanā*) and calming down the perception that feeling is permanent, etc. In this way, knowledge (*ñāṇa*) and calming of the mental formation (*citta-saṅkhāra*) go together. As a result, the meditator becomes wearied and dispassionate of feeling, thereby causing cessation, he renounces feeling; being dispassionate he abandons greed for feeling; while causing cessation he abandons arousing and while renouncing, he abandons clinging (to feeling). All this process takes place in exactly the same manner as we observed in detail while discussing the fifth Stage and it is in this sense that the development of the contemplation of feeling is called *Vedanānupassanā-satipaṭṭhāna-bhāvanā*[100] in the true and full sense of the term *bhāvanā* (development). And since the development is at height there is the gathering together (*samodhāna*) of different *dhammas*, beginning from

100. The Development of the Establishment of Mindfulness Consisting in Contemplation of the Feelings — see pp. 332–335 for details.

the Five Faculties and culminating in *Nibbāna*, the Deathless (*amatogadha Nibbāna*) and all this, as well, takes place as dealt with in the fifth Stage.

The term "calming" has the meaning of cooling down by degrees until finally the state of perfect calm emerges. This refers to the fact that, in the beginning, feeling becomes successively weaker and more powerless until it ceases to be manifest, as a result it conditions the mind less and less until eventually there is no conditioning of the mind at all. This is called "calming the mental-formation". This way of gradual calming down can be brought about because perception and feeling are controlled through controlling the breathing. In the beginning, with the aid of mindfulness perception and feeling are gradually calmed down; then by means of concentration they are made calm and disappear; and finally by the force of contemplation or insight (*anupassanā* or *ñāṇa*)[101] their power of conditioning

101. This refers to all seven stages, of *Anupassanā*—beginning from contemplating the *citta-saṅkāra* as impermanent, etc. up to renunciation—for details see pp. 335–347.

is neutralised, invalidated. All the time the meditator is developing contemplation during this Stage, the kind of perception and feeling that works as the mental-formation does not exist.

To sum up, mindfulness, concentration and contemplation (*anupassanā*) which here constitute development (*bhāvanā*) are developed by means of breathing in and out, and they control the breathing in such a way that perception and feeling are controlled.

Thus the development resulting in controlling perception and feeling is called *ānāpānasati* (mindfulness of breathing) because it is carried out by means of, or is connected with, breathing in and out, as are all the preceding stages. Again, this development is called *Vedanānupassanā-satipaṭṭhāna-bhāvanā* because it is concerned with the establishment of mindfulness by way of contemplating feeling. As this development has to do with each in- and out-breathing, so it is called both *ānāpānasati* as well as *Satipaṭṭhāna-bhāvanā.*

This is the explanation of the eighth Stage, and concludes the second Tetrad dealing with feelings as the object throughout the four steps of this Tetrad.

Final remarks: In the second Tetrad one is advised to observe that there are eight kinds of knowledge (*ñāṇa*) concerning contemplation[102] and eight kinds of establishment of mindfulness.[103] This means that the meditator:

(1) While experiencing rapture
  (I) breathes in mindfully.

(2) While experiencing rapture
  (II) breathes out mindfully.

(3) While experiencing bliss
  (III) breathes in mindfully.

(4) While experiencing bliss
  (IV) breathes out mindfully,

(5) While experiencing the mental-formation
  (V) breathes in mindfully.

(6) While experiencing the mental-formation
  (VI) breathes out mindfully.

(7) While calming the mental-formation
  (VII) breathes in mindfully.

(8) While calming the mental-formation
  (VIII) breathes out[104] mindfully.

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102. *Aṭṭha anupassane ñāṇāni.*

103. *Aṭṭha upaṭṭhānānussatiyo.*

104. cp. the four bases and eight modes, see p. 325.

Only when the meditator is in this way endowed with these eight kinds of knowledge of contemplation (1–8) through the eight kinds of Establishment of Mindfulness (I–VIII) is the practice of the second Tetrad perfected.

Chapter XV

The Third Tetrad

(from contemplating the characteristics of mind up to liberating it from things born with it)

Stage ix	Experiencing the mind while breathing in-and-out
Stage x	Gladdening the mind while breathing in-and-out
Stage xi	Concentrating the mind while breathing in-and-out
Stage xii	Liberating the mind while breathing in-and-out

As is clear from the above account the present Tetrad deals with mind as opposed to "breathing" in the first Tetrad and "feeling" in the second.

Stage ix

The guideline for practising the ninth Stage of *ānāpānasati* is this:

> "Experiencing the mind, I shall breathe out,"
> thus he trains himself;
>
> "Experiencing the mind, I shall breathe in,"
> thus he trains himself.

The essential points which should be discussed are, these: 1. He trains himself. 2. Experiencing the mind 3. Knowledge (*ñāṇa*) and mindfulness (*sati*) together with other *dhammas* which are developed by virtue of practice. The explanation is as follows:

The point "he trains himself" has the same meanings as all the other stages from the third Stage[105] onwards: Generally speaking, while the meditator is practising any of the stages of practice, no wrong action takes place whether in body or in speech and he is well restrained in the way of virtue or morality (*sīla*)—thus he is established in the Higher Training of Morality (*adhi-sīla-sikkhā*). At that time his mind is not distracted-thus be is established in the Higher

105. cp. explanation in the third Stage; pp. 120–123; also in the eleventh Stage, pp. 478–495.

Training of Concentration (*adhi-citta-sikkhā*).[106] When he contemplates the object, be it breathing, feeling or the mind, as the case may be, he sees it as impermanent, etc., thus he is established in the Higher Training of Wisdom (*adhi-paññā-sikkhā*). Such being the case, we can say that while training himself in any stage, the meditator is training himself in the Threefold Training (*tisikkhā*) in the full sense of the term.

It should be noted here that it does not matter by means of what object and in what Stage the meditator trains himself, for in each case he fully trains himself by way of the Threefold Training. The expression "thus he trains himself". as it also occurs in the rest of the Stages has the same meaning in terms of the Threefold Training.

As regards the second point of "experiencing the mind", we have here to consider the "experiencing" and "the mind" separately.

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106. *Adhi-citta-sikkhā* lit. means 'training in higher mind; i.e., concentrated mind'.

"Experiencing" has the same meaning as explained in the preceding stages. In summary, to experience anything implies to give rise to that thing and contemplate it as an object, thereby thoroughly knowing what it is and what characteristics it has, with the result that the meditator is wearied, dispassionate and finally renounces it, all the time breathing in and out. Presently, all this process of "experiencing" by way of giving rise to and finally renouncing applies to the mind, which will be explained in the following:

The mind is known by various names: intellect (*mano*),[107] intellection (*manasaṃ*),[108] heart

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107. *Mano* represents the intellectual functioning of consciousness, while *viññāṇa* represents the field of sense and sense reaction and, *citta* the subjective aspect of consciousness — the rendering with "mind" covers most of the connotations; sometimes it may by translated "thought" — PTS Dictionary.

108. "The position of *manasa* among the 6 *āyatanas* (or *indriyas*) is one of control over the other five (pure and simple senses) — PTS Dictionary.

(*hadayaṃ*), lucidity (*paṇḍaraṃ*), mind-base (*manāyatanaṃ*), mind-faculty (*manindriyaṃ*), consciousness (viññāṇaṃ),[109] consciousness-aggregate, (viññānakkhaṇdho), mind-consciousness-element (*mano-viññāṇa-dhātu*)[110]—all these terms refer to, or can be used in place of, *citta*, the mind.

Even though the term "heart" (*hadayaṃ*) is included in the list, it should be taken to represent the mind and not the physical organ of that name, as it is ordinarily understood. One should therefore know the meaning of all these terms and take them as different shades of meaning of the term mind or *citta*.

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109. To translate lit. the Thai version of *viññāṇa*: the phenomenon of knowing specifically (*viññāṇa*=cognition—PTS Dictionary).

110. *Mano-viññāṇa-dhātu* (element of representative intellection, mind cognition, the sixth of the *viññāṇa-dhātus* or series of cognitional elements corresponding to and based on the twelve simple *dhātus*, which are the external and internal sense-relations (*āyatanāni*)—PTS Dictionary.

Where can the mind be experienced? Those who practise *ānāpānasati* know well that the mind can be experienced in each and every stage of *ānāpāna-sati*. Therefore the meditator who has reached the present ninth Stage should note the state of the mind while practising each of the preceding eight stages. He has to begin anew from the very first Stage and successively proceed to the eighth Stage, noting in each the state of the mind. He will then see clearly how the state of the mind is while:

(1) Contemplating long breathing
(2) Contemplating short breathing
(3) Experiencing the whole body
(4) Calming the bodily-formation
(5) Experiencing rapture
(6) Experiencing bliss
(7) Experiencing the mental-formation
(8) Calming the mental-formation

Thus while noting the differences in states of mind in all corresponding stages, he comes to pierce through the mind as impermanent, unsatisfactory and no-self. Having gained the penetration of impermanence, etc., he rids himself of the perception of the mind as permanent, pleasurable and as a self or

entity, with the result that he becomes wearied and has no passion for the mind; he reaches "cessation of the mind"[111] and finally renounces it. All this gradual practice is made possible by contemplating in a successively more subtle manner by means of the sixteen ways.

At this point, to summarize the sixteen ways, we can say that *citta*, in each stage, becomes manifest to the meditator when he contemplates by means of breathing in and out in sixteen ways, that is, by experiencing the mind in sixteen ways, namely, by way of knowing, contemplating, perceiving, clearly seeing, reflecting, deciding mentally, resolving with faith, exerting energy, establishing mindfulness, concentrating the mind, knowing clearly through wisdom, knowing thoroughly through the highest knowledge (*abhiññāya abhijānato*), fully understanding, abandoning what should be abandoned, developing what should be developed and finally realizing what should be realized.

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111. In the Thai version it is "the element of knowing specifically through the mind (as against the sense organs of eye, etc.).

As the meditator practises in this manner with his mind one-pointed and not distracted in each phase of breathing in and out, the mind as a whole is clearly manifest to him as something compound, created (*saṅkhata*) and therefore impermanent, unsatisfactory, no-self, etc. This is the explanation of “experiencing the mind”.

Apart from the above explanation, we find in some places in the Scriptures other ways of looking at the characteristics of the mind (e.g., see *Mahā-satipaṭṭhāna-Sutta*, *Digha Nikāya*). We can in addition take them into account as principles with which to understand the mind.

They are to see whether:

(1) The mind is greedy or not greedy
(2) Hateful or not hateful
(3) Deluded or not deluded
(4) Contracted or scattered
(5) Developed or under-developed
(6) Surpassable or unsurpassable
(7) Concentrated or unconcentrated
(8) Liberated or unliberated

However all this shows that, no matter in what state the mind is, it has the general characteristics of impermanence, etc. From whatever angle a state of the mind is viewed, it leads to exactly the same result.

The third point, regarding knowledge (*ñāṇa*) and mindfulness (*sati*) together with other dhammas developed as a result of practice, has the same explanation as in the previous stages. Only the gist of it is given here:

When the meditator contemplates or experiences the mind in each or any of the sixteen ways, it is manifest clearly by means of breathing in and out, mindfulness is established and eventually performs the function of Insight Knowledge (*anupassaṇa-ñāṇa*). The meditator by means of that mindfulness and that knowledge experiences the mind through breathing in and out (in each of the eight modes of each of the first two Tetrads — see pp. 451–2.

In this way Development of Mindfulness reaches culmination and is called *Cittānupassanā-satipaṭṭhāna-bhāvanā*[112] because it is development or *bhāvanā*, complete in all the four definitions or senses: In the

sense that there is non-excess of the mental states arisen through (i) *Satipaṭṭhāna* (establishment of mindfulness); (ii) that the faculties, etc. function jointly to the same result; (iii) that energy is in conformity with Faculties and other dhammas; (iv) that the mind enjoys (see pp. 350–357). When the practice of *Satipaṭṭhāna-bhāvanā is* thus full-fledged, there is the gathering together (*samodhāna*) of the twenty-nine *dhammas*: the Five Faculties, the Five Powers, Seven Enlightenment-Factors, Eight Links of the Path, the Four Foundations of Mindfulness, and so, on to Emancipation, and *Nibbāna* (the Deathless).

Again, it is always understood that with the gathering together of different *dhammas* the meditator always knows the Domain (*gocara*) and penetrates the Benefit of Calm (*samattha*) of those respective dhammas or groups of *dhammas*. In short, there arises mindfulness, performing the function of contemplation and with it knowledge (*ñāṇa*) arises; development (*bhāvanā*) is at its height; twenty-nine

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112. The Development of the Establishment of Mindfulness Consisting in Contemplation of the Mind.

kinds of dhammas come together; the state of weariness, dispassion, cessation and renunciation in regard to the mind are manifest as in the case of rapture, etc.

Thus is the coming into being of knowledge, mindfulness, etc. by the power of the present Stage in which the meditator watches closely different kinds of mind as the object of his contemplation; he has insight into the fact that no matter how many different kinds of mind there are, all of them are equally subject to impermanence, unsatisfactoriness and no-self.

Now at this juncture we should observe the differences among the three Tetrads by taking a bird's eye view. When the three are compared it can be seen clearly that the first Tetrad deals with noting and controlling the breathing in various ways; the second Tetrad deals with noting and controlling feeling in various ways; the third Tetrad further deals with noting and controlling the mind in different ways.

Here it should be kept in mind that the term "noting" in each case refers to actually seeing what

characteristics the several objects of contemplation really have, what they arise from, how they cease to be and so forth; on the other hand, the term "controlling", implies calming down the objects in each case by making them successively more subtle, delicate and weaker so that gradually they become powerless and eventually condition nothing — or by successively clinging less and finally abandoning clinging (*ādāna*) to them altogether. All this is the main objective of practising *ānāpānasati-kammaṭṭhāna*.[113] In spite of all difficulties one should persevere in this.

To sum up, the meditator experiences the mind by means of Mindfulness and knowledge, thoroughly examines all states of mind which are manifest in *ānāpānasati* — with the result that eventually he does not in any way conceive the mind as ego or self in any form and is wearied and dispassionate with regard to clinging to it, regarding it as his ego or self as he previously used to.

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113. Subject of Meditation consisting of Mindfulness of Breathing.

Stage x

The guideline for practising the tenth Stage of *ānāpānasati* reads:

> "Gladdening the mind, I shall breathe out,"
> thus he trains himself;
>
> "Gladdening the mind, I shall breathe in,"
> thus he trains himself.

Here the expression "he trains himself" follows the pattern of explanation as given in the preceding Stage and elsewhere.[114]

The point to be discussed here is with regard to "gladdening the mind"; when does gladdening of the mind arise? What is gladdening of the mind like? The explanation is as follows.

Precisely, gladdening of the mind which is wholesome through *dhammas* can be induced while practising any of the stages of *ānāpānasati*. Therefore, the meditator undertaking the practice of the

114. See especially the third Stage for full treatment.

present Stage has to strive to give rise to gladdening of the mind in each of the preceding stages. He has to go back and practise, beginning with the first Stage onwards up to the ninth Stage, all the time striving to gladden the mind until gladness becomes manifest clearly and becomes gradually more subtle in each successive step as follows.

1. While clearly knowing one-pointedness and non-distraction of mind by means of long in and out breathing, there arises gladdening of the mind.
2. While clearly knowing one-pointedness and non-distraction of mind by means of short in and out breathing, there arises gladdening of the mind.
3. While clearly knowing one-pointedness and non-distraction of mind by means of experiencing the whole body there arises gladdening of the mind.
4. While clearly knowing one-pointedness and non-distraction of mind by means of calming the bodily-formation, there arises gladdening of the mind.

5. While clearly knowing one-pointedness and non-distraction of mind while experiencing rapture, there arises gladdening of the mind.
6. While clearly knowing one-pointedness and non-distraction of mind while experiencing bliss there arises gladdening of the mind.
7. While clearly knowing one-pointedness and non-distraction of mind by means of experiencing the mental-formation there arises gladdening of the mind.
8. While clearly knowing one-pointedness and non-distraction of mind while calming the mental-formation there arises gladdening of the mind.
9. While clearly knowing one-pointedness and non-distraction of mind while experiencing the mind there arises gladdening of the mind.[115]

When the practice goes like this, it is called the practice of the tenth Stage of *ānāpānasati*. The significance of this Stage is not only to know how, but to be able, to gladden the mind in each stage, and then to contemplate the very gladdening of the mind itself as an object that is impermanent, unsatisfactory and no-self.

Gladdening of the mind can always be induced in many different ways provided that ways and means which are its causes and conditions are developed. In the case of *ānāpānasati* gladdening of the mind can be brought about in various ways in connection with the nine stages as follows:

(1-2) In the first two stages of *ānāpānsati* gladness, or gladdening of the mind arises, primarily, because of the feeling of satisfaction which results from practising as such, or thought of having the chance to practise the way leading out of suffering[116] propounded by the Buddha. Secondly, gladness arises because contemplation of both long and short breathing meets with success.

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115. Precisely these nine stages can be put like this while clearly knowing one-pointedness and non-distraction of mind by means of "breathing in and out" in each of the eight modes of each of the first two Tetrads and the first two modes of the third Tetrad there arises gladdening of the mind — for modes, see f.n. 1 at p. 326.

116. *Nīyānika* or *Niyyānika*.

(3) In the third Stage there arises gladness which is more refined because the contemplation of the breathing becomes more subtle than before. At this time, the mental objects connected. with the third Stage, such as Zeal (*chanda*) and the like, become more intensive; and therefore gladness becomes more refined.

(4) In the fourth Stage, the practice of contemplation advances to the extent that *Jhānas* arise. With their arising gladness becomes more delicate by experiencing happiness here and now (*diṭṭha-dhamma-sukhavihāra*).

(5) In the fifth Stage, the meditator experiences *Pīti* which is a definite factor of *Jhāna* and very close to gladness itself. Gladness is thus exclusively contemplated and seen more clearly than ever before. At this time, it comes to be more involved with wisdom or insight through penetrating different feelings as impermanent, etc.

(6) In the sixth Stage, gladness, or gladdening of the mind, has similar features to the fifth Stage (but

more refined, of course) because it is contemplated or experienced in the form of a *Jhānic* Factor, i.e. in the form of bliss.

(7) In the seventh Stage, gladness becomes proportionately more delicate owing to the higher development of insight, and various feelings are noted as mental conditions. When feelings are thus known, the meditator becomes aware how things condition craving (*taṇhā*), clinging (*upādāna*), etc.; so much so that he now sees the way out of suffering more clearly, and hence gladness in proportion to the vividness of seeing the way.

(8) In the eighth Stage, the mind is fully gladdened and the meditator is able to calm the mental-formation. Because of this ability, he has the certainty that the control of defilements is within his reach.

(9) As for the ninth Stage, gladness arises because the meditator understands clearly all about the mind by knowing how it comes to be, how it ceases to be, what it delights in and so on—to the extent that he has the conviction: "I can control the mind".

Finally, in the tenth Stage, all the foregoing kinds of gladness are seen and dealt with being thus noted and contemplated. And thus the meditator comes to have an added kind of gladness, due to this sense of certainty: "Now I am able to control the mind just as I wish in the way in which I am presently ably controlling the mind and inducing gladness in diversified forms at will, and with the widest scope". Thus his mind is accordingly joyful through this most embracing and most lofty of gladnesses.

Now the point what gladness or gladdening of the mind is like can be discussed in two ways:

What is its meaning? In how many ways does it arise? There are these synonyms of "gladdening of the mind" (*cittassa abhippamodo*): rejoicing,[117] joy,[118] cheerfulness,[119] glee,[120] elation of mind,[121]

117. *āmodanā.*

118. *pamodanā.*

119. *hāso.*

120. *pahāso.*

121. *cittassa odagyaṃ.*

satisfaction of mind.[122] All of these terms help us to know the state of mind from different angles.

Generally speaking, gladdening of the mind, like rapture (*pīti*) and bliss (*sukha*) can be induced by sense pleasures (*geha-sita*),[123] and also by renunciation of sense pleasures (*nekkhamma-sita*). But, here it is connected with *Dhamma*, the renunciation of sense pleasure. One should observe that the single expression "gladness" or "gladdening the mind" is used in both the above cases but its meanings in the two cases are as far apart as the earth and the sky.

As to the point; in how many ways does gladdening of the mind arise which is connected with the *Dhamma*, it is clear from the method of *ānāpānasati* that it arises in two ways: it arises firstly in connection with Tranquillity (*samatha*) or concentration; and secondly in connection with Insight Knowledge or Wisdom.

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122. *cittassa attamantā.*

123. Lit. connected with household or worldly life.

Gladdening of the mind in connection with concentration evidently implies rapture and happiness which are factors of *Jhāna* or the feeling of happiness (*sukha*) resulting from one-pointedness (*ekaggatā*) and non-distraction of the mind present in each stage. All this refers to happiness born of *Jhāna*. However, even the sense of gratification, strongly rising on account of succeeding in practice, is also reckoned as gladdening of the mind through concentration because it is also rooted in concentration or tranquillity.

Gladdening the mind in connection with Insight Knowledge or Wisdom is more subtle, more lofty and of greater value: it arises when the meditator contemplates the gladness itself which is a feeling of all conditioned things (*saṅkhāra*) and sees them as impermanent, unsatisfactory and no-self. The contemplation of impermanence, etc. gladdens the mind because the meditator knows that he has now gone deeply into the understanding of dhammas— this is gladdening of the mind which is purely on the level of Dhamma. To make it clear, let us, for instance, take rapture. Rapture, which is a Factor of *Jhāna*, is reckoned as gladdening of the mind

connected with Tranquillity, but when that rapture is, like all feelings, contemplated as impermanent, etc. there arises another of kind, rapture which is rapture on a higher level of pure *dhamma* in connection with wisdom—so, there are two levels of rapture.

To sum up, one kind of gladdening of mind arises at the time when the mind is endowed with Tranquillity of concentration; and another kind of gladdening arises when the mind is possessed of Wisdom.

These two kinds of gladdening the mind permeate, are involved in, or, as it were, exist simultaneously in each stage of *ānāpānasati*. In whatever aspect or at whatever time, the practice of *ānāpānasati* is dominated by concentration (*samādhi*), gladdening of the mind in that respect is connected with that concentration; on the other hand, in whatever aspect or whatever level the practice of *ānāpānasati* is dominated by wisdom, gladdening of the mind in that respect is connected with wisdom. In this way we can say that gladdening of the mind, which the meditator has been inducing in all the nine stages and by virtue of which be now develops the tenth Stage, refers to only these two kinds of gladdening of

the mind already mentioned—that is, only these two kinds of gladdening, which are connected with renunciation (*nekkhamma*) are meant here and of the ones connected with worldliness (*geha-sita*) or sensual pleasures (*kāma*).

Here is a point to be observed: the practice of this tenth Stage is far greater fun than all the other stages. Why? Because, to put it in ordinary language, practising this Stage means amusing oneself. It is sporting in the exercise of meditation,[124] enjoying now this and now that kind of happiness. Now in sport or at play with this object of contemplation, now with that, backward and forward, in and out, in endless ways he amuses himself. It is fun for the meditator, so to say. For this reason the tenth Stage is most distinguished. It stands out in the line of practice of *ānāpānasati* as a whole. Even if one has reaped the fruit of one's practice of *ānāpānasati* only this much by being able to gladden the mind, we can say that one has attained to the Gem of *dhamma* (*Dhamma-ratana*). One is rich in gems of the Dhamma, knowing no limit. One should there-

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124. *Jhāna-kīḷā.*

fore, not only be highly interested in, but should also train oneself in, the practice of *ānāpānasati.*

Finally, the last point to be considered: how knowledge (*ñāṇa*) and mindfulness together with other *dhammas* come about — has in the main the same explanation as given in the previous stages. The point to be especially understood, particularly with regard to the tenth Stage, is that contemplation of gladness induced in each Stage by the power if one-pointedness and non-distraction is what is called (Establishment or Foundation of) Mindfulness.

Mindfulness or Recollection, when applied to watching gladness so closely that it is seen as impermanent, unsatisfactory and no-self is referred to as Insight Knowledge[125] and this is briefly called Knowledge. The meditator develops the contemplation of the mind which is endowed with different kinds of gladness by means of that Establishment of Mindfulness (*Satipaṭṭhāna*) and that Knowledge (Insight Knowledge) — and this practice of his is

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125. *Sati anupassanā-ñāṇaṃ*: Mindfulness is Insight Knowledge.

called *Cittānupassanā-satipaṭṭhāna-bhāvanā*[126] — it is *Bhāvanā*, development complete in all the four definitions or senses.[127] At that time the mind, being one-pointed and non-distracted by means of in- and out-breathing, the meditator gathers together as usual all the twenty-nine *dhammas*, knows their domain (*Samattha*), and penetrates their Benefit of Calm (*gocara*) as usual.[128]

Stage XI

The guideline for practising the eleventh Stage of *ānāpānasati* is:

> "Concentrating the mind, I shall breathe out," thus he trains himself;
>
> "Concentrating the mind, I shall breathe in," thus he trains himself.

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126. The Development of the Establishment of Mindfulness Consisting in Contemplation of the Mind.

127. See pp. 350–357.

128. See pp. 362–366; 385–404.

The explanation is as follows:

The essence of the point “he trains himself” is in all respects the same as dealt with in the tenth Stage and especially in the third Stage. The points considered with regard to the Threefold Training which are to be especially understood, particularly in the present Stage are as follows:

As far as the Higher Training of Morality[129] is concerned, one should know and examine properly how it is involved in the practice of the eleventh Stage. Fundamentally, the meditator is restrained. He has control over the mind by not letting it leave the object of contemplation in different Stages. This is called *Sīla* (Morality), Why is it so called? It is so called because whenever the mind is controlled nothing wrong is done either in body, speech or otherwise. This observation is useful in that, through it, one is not misled into thinking that it is not present or is unnecessary in this higher stage of practice, which is crowned with both concentration and wisdom. One should therefore keep in mind

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129. *Adhi-sīla-sikkhā*—cp. pp. 455–58.

that as a rule when one restrains the mind by the power of mindfulness[130] in any way, the training of morality is there in full in the very act of restraining. Even though one is absorbed in the practice of *ānāpānasati* on such high levels as, for instance, at the present Stage, restraint of Morality plays its part to the full as usual. Thus there are the three aspects of the training by way of harmonious unity of dhammas[131] in full swing.

Therefore, the expression "he trains himself" here, and in all of the remaining stages, has the meaning of training oneself fully in all the three aspects of the Training.

As far as concentration and wisdom are concerned, the state of affairs is clear: as we saw[132] in every stage (especially from the third Stage onwards) there is focusing of the mind on the respective objects leading to concentration, simultaneously

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130. *Sati-saṃvara*: means restraint by power of Mindfulness.

131. *Dhamma-samaṅgī*.

there is penetrating of the objects as impermanent, etc. leading to wisdom. But as for the aspect of *Sīla*, it is invisibly present, and one must know how to examine to see it clearly. In the first three stages of *ānāpānasati* the meditator is restrained by mindfully controlling the mind so as to apply it to the breathing in different modes and manners; this restraint on his part fulfills *Sīla*. In the fourth Stage, restraining, which is more difficult than before, is manifested by making efforts to gradually calm down the breathing. Restraint in the fifth and sixth Stages is manifested by noting rapture and bliss with unswerving non-delusion (i.e., to be restrained as regards yielding to their attraction).

In the seventh Stage restraint can be seen in watching feelings closely in their function of conditioning the mind. In the eighth Stage, restraint manifests in

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132. See pp. 332, 455–458 (Thus mindfulness leads to the fulfillment of the three aspects of the Threefold Training: applied for restraining it leads to the fulfillment of morality, applied for focusing to concentration and applied for penetration to Wisdom).

the form of striving to control feelings so that they do not condition the mind (or if they do, they do so to the minimum).

In the ninth Stage, restraint is blended with watching closely and observing different states of mind. In the tenth Stage, it is involved in encouraging the mind to be gladdened and with contemplating different kinds of gladness as impermanent, etc., so that one is not intoxicated by them. Restraint in the eleventh Stage can be seen in striving to uphold the mind to be concentrated in various ways. All this restraint, as manifested in different stages is always essentially *Sīla* or accomplishment of the Training of Higher Morality (*adhisīla-sikkhā*) in each case. In the same way Morality should be understood in connection with the remaining five stages. All this will not be discussed again at length, except to throw light on some particular angle, as may be deemed necessary.

The next point — "concentrating the mind" — is considered from two angles, that is: what is concentrating the mind, and when does it come into being?

Here the expression "concentrating the mind" means, in essence, attaining one-pointedness. As the state of concentration can be viewed from many different angles such questions as what concentration is can be answered by mentioning the following synonymous terms: establishment,[133] stability,[134] steadiness,[135] undisturbedness,[136] non-distraction,[137] undisturbed attention,[138] tranquillity,[139] Faculty of Concentration,[140] Power of Concentration,[141] and Right Concentration.[142] The list of synonyms is enough to give an idea of what concentration is

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133. *ṭṇiti.*

134. *saṇṭhiti.*

135. *adhiṭṭhiti.*

136. *avis'-āhāra.*

137. *avikkhepo.*

138. *avis'-āhata-mānasatā.*

139. *samatho.*

140. *samādhi-indriyaṃ.*

141. *samādhi-balaṃ.*

142. *sammā-samādhi.*

like — though there are many more synonyms which could well be added to the list.

Here is given a brief account of the above terms characterizing concentration so as to render them clear: First of all, it should be borne in mind that establishment, stability, etc., all refer to the state of the mind called concentration (*samādhi*). Now to take them one by one: (1) *Establishment* means the mind is established, unshaken by any of the hindrances (*nīvaraṇa*). (2) *Stability* means that the mind is stabilized, firmly established, and able to fight with the stimuli of different hindrances. (3) *Steadiness* means the mind is not unsteady or lacking in firmness and cannot be allured or overpowered by any stimuli. (4) *Undisturbedness*: the Pali term for this *avis'-ahāro* which is a metaphorical expression literally translated as "state free from poisoning of food". When food becomes poisoned in the stomach one feels restless like a man going to die; one is disturbed in one's activities, unable to do any work, not cheerful nor in any way in a happy mood. The mind is the same when there is inward poisoning of the mind, the mind is dead to the good, it is disturbed and cannot be exercised for any

action; it loses its freshness and is not bright. Therefore the state of concentration of the mind is compared to the physical state free from or undisturbed by poisoned food. (5) *Non-distraction* means that the mind is fixed on one single object and does not wander in the jungle of sense-objects. The mind is in a state comparable to that of an animal who, having got enough of what he wants in his lair does not wander hither and thither like a monkey, jumping from one tree to another, searching for fruits throughout the jungle. (6) *Undisturbed attention*: The Pali expression for this is *avis'-āhata-mānasatā* which literally means "the state of mind being unaffected by poison". Poison here means hindrances and the host of all other defilements. When defilements do not affect the mind it remains calm in its natural way. That the mind is unaffected, means it is free from the promptings of defilements, for instance, the promptings of craving, aversion, etc. When all such defilements are absent from the mind, the mind is calm and concentrated. (7) *Tranquillity*: The mind is calm and at peace with no more struggling; free from the force of passions it is undefiled and cool. (8) *Faculty of Concentration*: This means concentration which

is developed fully so that it is one of the chief or predominant qualities: (9) *Power of Concentration*: This term has virtually the same meaning as the preceding one in that it refers to concentration which is fully developed so that it is one of the powers used to oppose the forces of hindrances. (10) *Right Concentration*: This is to be understood as proper and correct concentration (which is a constituent of the Noble Eightfold Path as taught in Buddhism). There are outside Buddhism various kinds of concentration of mind; there are multifarious ways of concentrating the mind, which upon going astray lead to wrong concentration (*Micchā-samādhi*). None of them are intended here.

When one thinks over the implications of each of these ten terms in all their subtleties, one can thoroughly understand what concentration (*samādhi*) is like.

From the practical point of view, concentration defined precisely in the light of *ānāpānasati*, is one-pointedness and non-distraction of mind[143] by means

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143. *Cittassa ekaggatā avikkhepo samādhi.*

of long and short breathing in and out, or to put it in other words "by means of breathing in and out, concentrating the mind, the mind becomes one-pointed without any distraction—that is called *Samādhi*.[144]

The essence of all this is: when one has an object for contemplation and focuses one's mind on it, the very act of focusing is called concentration. No matter whether it is low medium or high, moderate or subtle, it is all equally referred to as concentration.

That is all about the meaning of concentration.

As mentioned above, concentration is present all the time one focuses one's mind on an object. This is a general fact about concentration. What is more, concentration can be found even at the time of developing insight (*vipassanā*), that is, when the mind contemplates the object by way of penetrating its characteristics of impermanence, etc. Therefore, to sum up the whole theme, it can be said that there is concentration on three main levels on three occasions.

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144. *Samādahaṃ cittam assāsapassāsavasena cittassa ekaggatā avikkhepo samādhi.*

(i) Concentration at the time of the beginning of focussing on an object. This refers to Preparatory Concentration[145] and Access Concentration.[146]

(ii) Concentrating at the time when the mind is fixed and has reached absorption. This is Full Concentration.[147]

(iii) Finally, there is concentration which is called *Ānantarika-samādhi*[148] — going along with Wisdom (*paññā*) at the time when there is focusing on an object, contemplating its characteristics of impermanence, etc.

I. Concentration in the first case is concentration in the initial stage of focusing on an object. It is

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145. *Parikamma-samādhi.*

146. *Upacāra-samādhi.*

147. *Appanā-samādhi* (cp. pp. 77, 216, etc.)

148. *Ānantarika-samādhi* lit. means Immediate Concentration; it implies concentration co-existing simultaneously with the developing of Insight.

concentration in an indirect or implied sense, that is, it is not of a sufficiently high standard to be called “pure” concentration. It is comparable to a child not yet fully matured into a man. Nevertheless, to have concentration in its undeveloped form is still better than not to have it at all. The essence of concentration on this first level is: as soon as the meditator undertakes the practice of concentration he begins to have, from the very outset, concentration in its undeveloped form and as he goes on practising he achieves access concentration. This is the state of concentration in which the mental hindrances (*nīvaraṇa*) sometimes calm down, sometimes spring up again or, at the most, are weakened because the Factors of *Jhāna* which make for full concentration have not yet been firmly established. Therefore, concentration in this early stage is concentration in the implied or indirect sense; however, it is, as said, worth attempting anyway.

II. In the second case, Full Concentration (*appanā-samādhi*) refers to the state of absorption which is pure concentration in the full sense of the term “*samādhi*”. When we speak about concentration in its literal sense, we mean attainment of absorption

on one level, or the other, whether material, based on Form,[149] or immaterial, based on Non-Form.[150] If the meditator wants to attain the immaterial or formless absorptions (Absorptions based on Non-Form) through practising *ānāpānasati*, he may do so in this eleventh Stage—an explanation has been given to this effect elsewhere[151] because here we are only really concerned with the four material absorptions (Absorptions based on Form).

III. In the third case, concentration is inseparably connected with Wisdom (*paññā*) and is, like concentration in the first case, regarded as such in the applied sense because at this Stage wisdom predominantly performs its function side by side with the power of concentration.

How do concentration and wisdom become connected?

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149. *Rūpa-jhāna.*

150. *Arūpa-jhāna.*

151. See Supplementary Section Two: The Path of Arahantship and Section Three, Item C.

The process is as follows: First, the meditator focuses his attention on an object of concentration and finally attains absorption. He stays in absorption for some time — the period needed to get the mind strengthened, straightened and wieldy — and then he emerges from absorption.

Having come out of absorption, be takes up an object for developing Insight (*vipassanā*), for instance, feeling (*vedanā*) and contemplates it, penetrating its characteristics of impermanence, etc. At this time, the power of concentration involved is the very act of contemplation. Concentration is harmoniously blended with wisdom in due proportion, i.e., when contemplating by developing wisdom becomes intensified, the power of concentration becomes proportionately intensified; if contemplation slows down; the power of concentration is correspondingly slowed down — all this happens automatically without any intention on the part of the meditator. This kind of concentration is called concentration at the time of developing Insight (*vipassanā*) and for this reason it is referred to here as concentration in an implied sense; however, this is higher in value than concentration in the first case (which is also concentration

by implication, since it is not full concentration). From the characteristics of the above-mentioned three levels of concentration, it becomes clear when concentration comes into being, at what time, what characteristics and functions it has—all this makes one thoroughly understand the state of the mind when it is concentrated.

The main principle in the eleventh Stage of *ānāpā-nasati* is to concentrate the mind by means of breathing in and out. The meditator must therefore go back as usual and start practising from the first Stage onward in order to contemplate, as object, the state of concentration of mind which has different characteristics in the various stages. At this time, the essence of the training is to focus attention on the state of concentration, no matter in what stage of *ānāpānasati* one is training oneself. In the light of the explanation of the preceding stages, one can see that, although there is training in a particular stage of *ānāpānasati* bearing the same name and dealing with the same theme, yet the way of contemplation is different: to give an illustration, when the meditator trains himself in the first Stage, he focuses his attention on the breathing in and out itself; but

when he comes to train himself in the eleventh Stage and for this purpose returns to the first Stage, he does not directly focus his attention on the breathing as such, but instead must contemplate the state of concentration of the mind, whatever its degree of development at that time by means of breathing in and out.

In this way, beginning from the first Stage he moves onwards in order to note and examine the state of concentration of mind in all subsequent Stages of *ānāpānasati*. In each particular stage, he notes by seeing what degree of concentration has developed and what level it has reached. He knows clearly in which stage and which way concentration gradually becomes blended with Insight (*vipassanā*) or Wisdom (*paññā*). In this way, eventually, through his own experience he knows concentration of all kinds or types from all aspects and angles, in all degrees and levels. We can, therefore, see clearly that even though the meditator recommences from the first Stage, the way of concentration is different.

To sum up, training in this eleventh Stage implies training in contemplating all kinds of concentration

existing in all stages from the point of view of both Tranquillity (*samatha*) and Insight (*vipassanā*), with the result that one is well-versed in concentrating the mind skilfully, in every way, as one wishes.

As for the explanation of the last point: how, at this time of practice, does knowledge and mindfulness together with other allied *dhammas* arise? One should know that when, by means of breathing in and out, the mind is concentrated, irrespective of the level of concentration, there is manifest concentration of mind, and mindfulness which is established performing the function of contemplating that state of concentration, and thus there arises the mind which knows clearly, i.e., *viññāṇa-citta*,[152] and all this accounts for Insight Knowledge (*anapassanā-ñāṇa*) as explained previously. Such being the case, there is contemplating the mind in the mind by the power of mindfulness to the extent that concentrated as the mind is, it is, on all levels, pierced through as impermanent, unsatisfactory, and no-

152. *Viññāṇa-citta* lit. the conscious mind, or "consciousness-mind." Mind which is consciousness.

self. When the practice proceeds in this way, it is termed *Cittānupassanā-satipaṭṭhāna-bhāvanā*[153] — it is *Bhāvanā* (development) complete in all the four definitions or senses (pp. 350–357).

At this time of practice, there is gathering together of all the twenty-nine kinds of *dhammas* together with knowing their domain (*gocara*) and penetrating their Benefit of Calm (*samatha*) as explained in the fifth Stage.

Stage XII

The guideline for practising the twelfth Stage of *ānāpānasati* reads:

> "Liberating the mind, I shall breathe out,"
> thus he trains himself;
>
> "Liberating the mind, I shall breath in,"
> thus he trains himself.

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153. The Development of the Establishment of Mindfulness Consisting in Contemplation of the Mind.

The explanation is as follows:

To train oneself in the three aspects of the training (*sikkhā*) through practising this Stage: to gather mindfulness, to closely watch the mind by way of liberating it from different things, or even to note different kinds of liberation of the mind is restraint which is highly developed and is most refined. In the present Stage this amounts to the fulfillment of the Training of Higher Morality.[154] As for the remaining two aspects of the training, i.e. Higher Concentration[155] and Higher Wisdom,[156] they are here fulfilled as in the other stages previously explained. Hence there is no need to consider them again.

At this Stage the point "liberating the mind" is to be considered in two ways: (1) How is the mind liberated? (2) What is it liberated from?

These questions are dealt with as follows: the point how the mind is liberated is to be considered first

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154. *Adhi-sīla-sikkhā.*

155. *Adhi-citta-sikkhā.*

156. *Adhi-paññā-sikkhā.*

because this point can be easily understood; we can avail ourselves of the explanations of related matters given earlier, especially the Factors of *Jhāna* dealt with in the fourth Stage, and, the abandoning of the perception of permanence,[157] etc., explained in the fifth Stage.

The expression “liberating the mind” has two meanings. The first meaning, which is of immediate concern to us, is liberating the mind from things which have arisen in it; the second meaning is liberating the mind from things for which it has clinging (*upādāna*), resulting from ignorance, which lies hidden as a latent tendency (*anusaya*). To put all this in another way, instead of saying “liberating the mind” we may say “removing things which should be removed the mind”—it amounts to the same thing; the way of expression is different.

To liberate the mind, or to remove things which should be removed from the mind, refers to making the mind free from the hindrances (*nīvaraṇa*) while developing concentration, beginning from the first

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157. *Nicca-saññā.*

level up to the full-fledged condition in the form of absorption. Concentration which has not culminated in absorption also suppresses hindrances to some extent in proportion to its intensity; being as yet undeveloped, it is still wavering and is at times high and low like the tide in its natural course; however it has the function of removing hindrances from the mind, however weak they may be. When the meditator diligently and earnestly practises this Stage, the mind is liberated from the hindrances. This shows further that for training himself in the twelfth Stage, the meditator must enlarge the field of his practice, that is, he has again to go back to the early stages and practise contemplation there to see how the hindrances are suppressed or removed in each of those stages.

But in fact, "liberating the mind" has at least the meaning of completely freeing the mind from hindrances and not merely their partial suppression as in the early stages. But that we have here mentioned their partial suppression is for the sake of pointing out at what point in the practice the removal of hindrances can be seen. Therefore, he who wants to go back and train himself in noting this process of

removing hindrances from the first stage onwards, should do so. By training himself like this, the hindrances which are still lingering in the state of rising and falling, creeping and crawling, are removed, with the result that he will understand the meaning of the expression "liberating the mind" in connection with all stages beginning from the early ones.

To liberate the mind from hindrances at the level or stage of tranquillity (*samatha*) means to put an end to the Five Hindrances by the power of the first absorption. This is called removing the Five Hindrances from the mind. Ascending a little higher, applied thought[158] and sustained thought[159] are removed by the power of the second absorption—think how much the mind is cleansed then.

Then coming still higher rapture[160] is removed by the power of the third absorption and, finally, by the power of the fourth absorption, the mind is released

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158. *vitakka* (also translated as "scanning").

159. *vacāra* (also translated as focusing).

160. *pīti* (also translated as "joy").

from the feelings of both pleasure and displeasure. The meditator must strive to note how the mind is released from the Hindrances — how it becomes pure or cleansed thereby; how it is successively released from the coarser Factors of *Jhāna* and thereby correspondingly more pure. Thus he trains himself over and over again and becomes skilled in. various ways of liberating the mind — to the point where it becomes child's play for him, as it were. Consequently, he is successful in liberating the mind on the first level of Tranquillity.

Next, we come to the second level, in which the mind is liberated from things which it itself is grasping (*upādāna*). This refers to releasing the mind on the level of Insight. Releasing the mind on this level can be realized while practising *ānāpānasati* by taking up any material[161] or mental[162] phenomenon and contemplating it as impermanent, unsatisfactory, no-self, etc. If the meditator goes back and begins to train himself from the first Stage, he takes

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161. *rūpa.*

162. *nāma.*

breathing in and out long as object of contemplation to see the characteristics of impermanence, etc., of the breathing. In every stage of the first Tetrad, it is the breathing itself in different forms which is used for contemplating by seeing its characteristics. In the whole of the second Tetrad it is the feelings of different kinds that are used for this purpose and in the third Tetrad it is the mind in different forms that is used for this purpose, i.e., used as object for contemplating to see its impermanence., etc.

Whenever contemplation is fully operative the three general characteristics are fully realized. Therefore whoever and wherever and in whatever context there is the seeing of impermanence, then and there the mind is liberated from the Perception of Permanence (*nicca-saññā*); whenever anything is seen as unsatisfactory, the mind is liberated. from the Perception of Pleasure (*sukkha-saññā*) at that very moment, in that connection; whenever there is the penetration of the characteristic of no-self, the mind is liberated from the Perception of Self (*atta-saññā*).

When the mind comes to be wearied,[163] it is liberated from *Nandi*, i.e. enjoying the objects concerned.

When the mind becomes dispassionate[164] it is liberated from greed or passion;[165] when the mind is "ceasing"[166] then there being nothing to fabricate it, it is liberated from arousing,[167] i.e. being conditioned; when the mind renounces[168] it is liberated from clinging[169] — all these points have already been dealt with in detail in the fifth Stage (See pp. 336–348) — that is what is meant by liberating the mind on the level of Insight (*Vipassanā*). On the level of Tranquillity (*Samatha*) the mind is liberated from the hindrances (*nīvaraṇa*) and different unwholesome things together with the different Factors of *Jhānas* by the power of the succeeding absorptions; but on the level of Insight (*Vipassanā*) the mind is liberated from wrong views (Perception of Permanence, etc.)

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163. *nibbindati.*

164. *virajjati.*

165. *rāga.*

166. *nirodheti.*

167. *samudaya.*

168. *patinissajjati.*

169. *ādāna.*

and different subtle defilements (*kilesa*) by the power of Wisdom. All that has been said here is the answer to the question: how is the mind liberated? Here we have given examples of the way of removing the hindrances by means of concentration (*Samādhi*) and removing the Perception of Permanence by means of Wisdom, illustrating what the act of liberating the mind is like.[170] Now we shall proceed further to consider the question: what is the mind liberated from?

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170. cp. (I) The expression of the Buddha: *Visaṅkhara-gataṃ cittaṃ* lit. "The mind has gone to the state of being not-conditioned". Trans. (II) In this case the mind neither fabricates nor is it fabricated.

Author.

In the light of the foregoing, the expression "ceasing" (of the mind) does not imply that the mind ceases to be as such; instead it means that the mind ceases to be aroused by this or that and ceases (to be) arousing anything. At this stage the mind rests within itself arising and ceasing in the natural flow of its intrinsic nature (cp. p. 198). Trans.

To the question what the mind is liberated or released from, we find in the Scriptures the general answer that the mind is to be liberated from the defilements: greed or passion, hate or hatred, conceit, wrong-view, uncertainty, sloth-and-torpor, restlessness, lack of shame and finally lack of moral dread.[171]

However, one should note that the above answer is merely an example of a convenient classification of defilements. Further one should observe that the above list begins with the most powerful defilements, the less powerful ones following in descending order. People now-a-days are different preferring to arrange things in ascending order low to high, or from the rather insignificant to the most significant. It seems in the Scriptures the defilements have been arranged in descending order to make us realize that what comes first is the most fearful thing, so that we can became interested or be sufficiently energetic and fully determined. to liberate the mind

171. They are respectively: *rāga*, *dosa*, *moha*, *māna*, *diṭṭhi*, *vicikicchā*, *thīna-middha*, *uddhacca*, *ahirika*, *anottappa*.

from it; and only if we cannot do that, do we come to the defilement next in order.

Someone may wonder by what means all these defilements are to be removed. The simple answer, which occurs to everyone, is that they can be removed with the help of the wholesome things (*dhammas*) that are their counterparts by practising in different. ways as mentioned above in connection with the question how the mind is liberated. It can be clearly seen that there are defilements which are to be directly removed by practising on the level of Insight. The last five defilements, namely, uncertainty, sloth and torpor, restlessness, lack of shame, lack of moral dread, can be removed by practising on the level of concentration or Tranquillity, provided if they are unwholesome phenomena on a low level (i.e., in a gross form). If they are on the level of being ingrained subtle defilements (i.e., very refined) they have to be removed by practising on the level of Insight as before. For example, restlessness (*uddhacca*) normally means a hindrance (*nīvaraṇa*) and here also it refers to a hindrance; but this is also a name for one of the Ten Fetters (*saṃyojana*) and is to be removed directly by the power of wisdom or knowledge (*vijjā*).

If the meditator intends to train himself as much as he can in liberating the mind from defilements, then by means of different stages of *ānāpānasati* which he is normally practising he can do so to that extent, as mentioned when illustrating the question how the mind is liberated—and that is enough, too. But if he intends to study and train himself more thoroughly in the liberation of the mind from each of the defilements listed above, then he must appropriately study the wholesome counterparts of those defilements. They will now be treated one by one as follows:

1. While liberating the mind from greed (*rāga*), one has to consider wisely the counterpart which is able to calm down *rāga*, such as Recollection (or Mindfulness) of the Body[172] which also includes Perception of Impurity.[173] "Mindfulness of the Body" essentially means to dissect the body into its constituent parts, especially into the four elements[174]

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172. *kāyagatā-sati.*

173. *āsubha-saññā.*

174. *dhātu* (earth, air, fire and water, which are respectively solidity, motion, heat, cohesion).

and contemplate each part (or group of elements) as loathsome.[175] As for developing Perception of Impurity one contemplates impurity of the body, especially a corpse, or realize that the body is doomed to become like this. The perceiving of loathsomeness of the body, both in its live and dead states calms down *rāga* for forms which stimulate the feeling (such as that for the opposite sex). *Rāga* is the grasping of details[176] of the form as pleasant or taking the whole[177] as pleasant.

Recollection of the body is the direct way for liberating the mind from *rāga*. The indirect or general way for this purpose is to make the mind concentrated by way of practising *ānāpānasati*, etc. When the mind has attained concentration *rāga*, together with other defilements, are calmed down — this point has already been explained elsewhere. As a principle, when the mind has attained to concentration by the power of practising *ānāpānasati*, this results in its

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175. *paṭikkūla*.

176. *anubbayañjana-ggāhi*.

177. *nimitta-ggāhi*.

liberation from unwholesome things and that is enough for practice which is, as it were, fighting directly against them.

The meditator must be already familiar with bending his mind to contemplate the body by way of analysing it into its elements or clearly seeing it as loathsome, and now that he wisely reflects in that way while each time breathing in and out, this amounts to removing *rāga* through practising *ānāpānasati* as well. If one wants to practise for removing *rāga* in a different way (other than *ānāpānasati*) the direct way is to develop recollection of the body or perception of impurity, which are separate subjects in themselves not directly concerned with *ānāpānasati* here — and can be studied from works directly concerned with them.[178]

2. To liberate the mind from Hate (*Dosa*) the direct way is to develop Loving-kindness (*mettā-bhāvanā*), i.e., by developing the feeling and thought of regarding all beings, whether human or other-

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178. For example the Visuddhi-magga, The Path of Purification.

wise, as fellow beings in suffering. The feeling of anger can be calmed down and replaced by a feeling of forgiveness. Also by contemplating that all beings are in the grip of defilements, or are helplessly subjected to the law of impermanence, compassion is aroused and thereby anger or feelings of ill-will are calmed down. Apart from all this there are other miscellaneous methods, such as reflecting that each every being equally likes happiness and dislikes suffering. Each is a victim of his own *kamma*, none of them any more wants to do to others anything that will bring misfortune. All of these ways of contemplation can liberate the mind from the feeling of hatred, if practised all the time with each in breathing and out breathing.

3. Delusion (*moha*) can be removed by means of realization arising from analysing and considering wisely the things in which one is deluded, mostly through misconceiving. Out of one's misconception one searches for happiness in or from things which are unsatisfactory and does wrong things which bring opposite results against one's expectations. One must know whatever is unsatisfactory (*dukkha*) as unsatisfactory, and must know

everything which forms the basis for suffering and unsatisfactoriness. That refers to all the things which are conditioned. One must consider wisely to see the root cause of suffering and through its cessation, the cessation of suffering. The meditator must also see the way for practising for eventually putting an end to that cause of suffering completely. When one understands all this there can be no delusion and, if one is aware of this, all the time with each in-breathing and out-breathing, it amounts to liberation of the mind from Delusion while breathing in and out.

4. Conceit (*māna*) can be removed by means of developing the Perception of No-self (*anatta-saññā*), which means to contemplate that there is in reality no soul, no ego, no "I" no "he", except the "I" and "he" which are just the creations or fabrications of delusion or ignorance (*avijjā*). Contemplating along these lines will enable one to see that all self, "I" or "he" is pure illusion (*māyā*) and one will thereby realise the truth and feel ashamed to have clinging for the concepts of "I", "me", etc. any longer. Such being the case, one will cease to feel or think that there is "I" or "he", one will not at all fancy "I am

better than him, superior to him", or "I am equal to him", or "I am worse than him, inferior to him". One will no more have any pride, which is merely an illusion. If one sees the illusiveness of "I" or "mine" all the time, with each in-breathing and out-breathing, that is called liberating the mind from pride and conceit while breathing in and out.

5. Wrong View (*diṭṭhi*) is to be removed by means of right understanding (*Sammā-diṭṭhi*). The wrong view that all things are permanent can be calmed by right understanding that everything is continuously changing, because everything comes into being depending upon its conditions;[179] the only thing that is permanent being that which is not caused or conditioned. The wrong view that all things exist without becoming extinct, and even the extreme view that thing always exist in the same form, or the other extreme view that all things are just nothing can all be straightened out by the right understanding that all things have their corresponding causes and conditions, that they operate dependent on causes and conditions. Things spring

179. *paccaya.*

up, appear or manifest and cease to be, dependent upon their causes and conditions.

Therefore one should not say categorically that they "exist" or that they "do not exist". As for the wrong view which goes so far as to hold that there is nothing whatsoever — i.e., doing good or evil has no meaning, there is no action or reaction[180] — this can be straightened out by rightly understanding the facts about "self" and "no-self". All conditioned things (*saṅkhāra*) are no-self and the personality is no-self; but then it should be understood that whatever act is done with intention (*cetanā*) through that bundle of conditioned things the so-called "person", the outcome of that action appropriately affects those conditioned things constituting the so-called individual (which is really dividual i.e. divisible into many mental and physical phenomena). The action is no-self (not done by any self). The result is no-self (not experienced by any self), suffering is no-self (there is no self to suffer). Everything is no-self, devoid of any self, but there can be suffering, therefore, nothing should be done which will condition

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180. *ahetuka-diṭṭhi* — lit. the view of causelessness.

suffering or lead to suffering. The references to the existence of a person, an individual who acts, etc. are just conventional and relative terms used for convenience in order to know and avoid suffering and not to be clung to as reality. The purpose of teaching that one should go beyond conventional concepts of "I", "person", "individual", etc. is to make and know the truth of no-self and to destroy one's clinging to one's "person" and with it all defilements responsible for unwholesome actions resulting in suffering. One should not mistakenly think that since everything, is no-self, one can do anything one likes, on the pretext "there is no self, there is no merit (good), no evil, so it makes no difference whether I do this or do that".

The wrong view that things do not depend on causes can be calmed by wisely considering and analysing things until one sees that everything is caused and conditioned. "If there be no causes, how can things spring up, change and cease to be?" The wrong view that suffering, etc. depends on external agencies such as spirits, God or gods, can be straightened out by considering that nothing external takes precedence over the inner cause. The

inner cause refers to kamma or one's own actions which are rooted in defilements or cravings, which, in their turn, spring from the basic condition of ignorance (*avijjā*). Even though there are spirits and gods, no matter how powerful or forceful they are, they cannot be a match for this inner cause headed by ignorance. Therefore one should see clearly that all things have their several causes and conditions for coming into being, that they are governed by the universal law of cause and effect, and that the real causes of suffering are *kamma* and *kilesa* (defilements). With cessation of these causes, suffering ceases — God, spirits, gods, etc. have no say in this matter. One should not hold the fatalistic view and let things pass in their own way, for that will serve no purpose. One must control one's *kamma* or actions by directing them properly and finally, gradually but surely, pass beyond both good and evil. All this is achieved in accordance with the law of cause and effect by means of practice done appropriately in all faithfulness to that law. To sum up, to have right understanding all the time, with each in breathing and out breathing, amounts to liberating the mind from wrong view while breathing in and out.

(Hereafter follows the explanation of the remaining unwholesome things which are comparatively weaker —some of them having a two fold meaning).

6. Uncertainty (*Vicikichā*): If by the term uncertainty is meant a hindrance (*nīvaraṇa*) then it is the kind of unwholesome state which can be calmed by the power of the *Jhāna*. If by uncertainty is meant a latent tendency (*anusaya*), then it is to be calmed down by the power of higher knowledge or vision of things as they really are. But all this should be with regard to a particular field, which should be understood and which has direct reference to the cessation of suffering or, in other words, of defilement. If one is still it doubt or uncertain about any point regarding the cessation of suffering, one should hasten to consider that point wisely until finally one attains conviction based on sound reasoning, without any trace of doubt. Such a person has no wavering or doubt about the Enlightenment of the Buddha because he considers deeply and sees clearly for himself that if one practices according to the teaching of the Enlightened One, one can really put an end to suffering. His belief or conviction is not based on hearsay; he is not led by popular belief. He has no

skepticism as to the *Dhamma*, especially as to the way of practice as taught by the Perfect One, leading to the attainment of *Nibbāna*; because he has considered well and sees for himself that the way, when put into practice, does lead to the cessation of defilements and eventually to the cessation of suffering. He has no doubts as to the nobility of the *Sangha*, the community of the Noble Ones because he sees there do exist people who can practise the *Dhamma* and attain to the Noble Truth of the Cessation of Suffering.[181]

He has no hesitation in giving up the defilements because he sees clearly that it is only through giving up the defilements that the cessation of suffering can be actually realized. He is free from any doubt regarding the law of *Kamma*; it is clear to him that in this world doing good does bear good fruits, that doing evil surely entails evil consequences, and that this is all true according to the conventionalism and concepts concerned with the mundane level. He also knows that on the supramundane level, both doing good and doing evil are to be given up because clinging to each of them is equally responsible for

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181. *Dukkha-nirodha-ariya-sacca.*

subjecting one to the Cycle of Becoming, and that *Nibbāna*, which is defined as the cessation of Suffering, can be realised only when one is completely free from kamma, both good and bad. When one has such clear understanding of all the above points one is said to have liberated the mind from uncertainty.

7. Sloth-and-Torpor (*thīna-middha*), one of the hindrances, can be got rid of by the power of the Factors of *Jhāna* such as applied thought, which directly reacts against this defilement. The term sloth-and-torpor has never been used as a name on the list of other subtle kinds of defilements, such as the set of latent tendencies (*anusaya*). If it is to be *seen*, it is to be found in the form of delusion (*moha*) and therefore can be got rid of in the same way as delusion. It is apparently because Sloth-and-Torpor are marked by delusion, and the term "delusion" is used already, that the term "sloth-and-torpor" is not found itemized in the set of *anusaya* or other kinds of subtle defilements. To list it would be superfluous repetition to no purpose.

8. Restlessness (*Uddhacca*) as a hindrance (*nīvaraṇa*) can be calmed down by the Factors of

Jhāna which react directly against it, they are sustained thought (*vicāra*) and happiness (*sukkha*). As a fetter (*saṃyojana*), restlessness means agitation of the mind induced by a reaction to a stimulus under the power of delusion. In this sense restlessness is manifested in the form of curiosity to know or to understand things which attract one's attention and provoke or incite one's imagination in the forms of different thought constructions. Restlessness in this meaning of a subtle *Saṃyojana* (fetter) has to be calmed down by the power of the kind of wisdom which forms the Noble Path on the highest level. It is only through the highest wisdom that one is able to cut one's craving to know or be interested in this or that, and one can completely give up harbouring curiosity, thinking and speculating, worrying, fearing, etc.; all such varied forms of restlessness are brought an end in their totality. Therefore, precisely, if knowledge (*ñāṇa*) with regard to no-self or voidness (*suññatā*) has illumined one's mind and heart, restlessness in its various forms just cannot come about.

9. Lack of Shame (*Ahirika*) is a kind of feeling, on the strength of which one has no shame in doing evil. It is calmed through considering and seeing

that by doing evil the mind is defiled, becomes lowly and degraded, and that the person concerned falls below the dignity of a human being. By considering wisely in this way there is aroused the sense of shame or the feeling of disgust and aversion towards evil. Just as a man on the worldly level dislikes any form of dirtiness and keeps himself physically clean, so too a man can keep himself mentally clean all the time while breathing in and out on the level of the *Dhamma* by overcoming lack of shame in doing evil.

10. Lack of Moral Dread (*anottappa*) means to have no fear of doing evil. It can be overcome by wisely considering the deadly and terrible faults or disadvantages of evil, by considering that lack of moral dread is far more dreadful than the things which one normally fears such as tigers, ghosts, etc. By the power of such a consideration the feeling of moral dread is aroused which keeps one aloof from the pitfalls of evil in the same way as a person who loves his life dreads and keeps aloof from the danger which may take his life. To compare, in order to see easily the sense of shyness or shame (*hiri*) and the sense of moral dread (*ottappa*) (which are the counter-parts of items 9 and 10

respectively), the person should think how he would feel if he were, on the one hand, made to touch a dirty object, such as a worm in a heap of fæces! And if he were, on the other hand, face to face with a tiger in the jungle, instead of at the zoo!

All that has been said is an account of the counterparts of each of the ten unwholesome things, and they can as well be used as instruments to liberate the mind from all the said unwholesome things. When the meditator is unable to overcome any of the ten unwholesome things directly by means of contemplating breathing alone or through the power of concentration alone, he must then, from time to time as necessary, resort to the respective wholesome things which are the opposites of the unwholesome things. While developing the corresponding wholesome things in opposition to the unwholesome ones, he watches all the time with each in-breathing and out-breathing how the mind is being liberated from that unwholesome thing. He is then said to be one developing *ānāpānasati* all the time.

While liberating the mind in this way there is mind which is sheer knowing, sheer consciousness

(*viññāṇa-citta*—cq. p. 171). Knowledge (*ñāṇa*) also exists, mindfulness[182] (*sati*) is established contemplating the mind as to how it is liberated from different unwholesome things. Mindfulness comes to be insight knowledge watching closely that both the unwholesome things covering and surrounding the mind and mind itself which is covered—together with the mind which is even liberated[183]—are all equally conditioned things (*saṅkhāra*). Therefore they are impermanent, unsatisfactory (*dukkha*) and no-self. With this understanding the meditator comes to be wearied.

When the practice, etc. operates like this, it is called *Cittānupassanā-satipaṭṭhāna-bhāvanā*[184] which is

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182. cp. p. 334.

183. The word *Dukkha* is composed of 'du' plus 'kha', lit. 'du' means difficult, hard and 'kha' means to endure, to stand. Hence even the mind which is liberated (as is meant here) is *dukkha* because its state of liberation is difficult or hard to endure. It is temporary and therefore unsatisfactory—cp. STAGE XIII.

the concluding of the third Tetrad of *ānāpānasati*. As *Bhāvanā* is at its height and is perfect in all of the four implications as mentioned previously (see pp. 212–357), he gathers all the twenty-nine kinds of dhammas as explained earlier in the fifth Stage.

To conclude the third Tetrad, one should especially note one more point, i.e., while each step is equally concerned with concentration of the mind (*cittānupassanā*) the way of contemplating varies in each case: In the first step the mind is concentrated by way of watching closely its different characteristics as manifested from the very beginning of practising *ānāpānasati* (from the first step of the first Tetrad), right up to this Stage. In the second step the concentration is applied to the mind which is gladdened in the *Dhamma* or which (automatically) has gladness in the *Dhamma* by watching how gladdening of the mind becomes successively more subtle. In the third step contemplation is directed towards the mind, which is being concentrated, noting carefully how the mind

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184. The Development of the Establishment of Mindfulness Consisting in Contemplation of the Mind.

gradually comes to be concentrated from the lowest level to the highest, from the coarsest level to the most subtle. And, finally, in the fourth step contemplation is directed to the mind which is being liberated, watching closely how the mind is liberated from different unwholesome things.

All these various kinds of contemplation are carried out by means of breathing in and out to the extent that the development of the establishment of mindfulness is at its height. As a result different dhammas are gathered together or induced (*samodhāna*) equally in each and every case or step of practice.

CHAPTER XVI

THE FOURTH TETRAD

(From the Contemplation of Impermanence
up to the Contemplation of Relinquishment)

The method of practice in the fourth Tetrad which deals with The last four stages is as follows:

STAGE XIII Contemplating Impermanence all the time while breathing in-and-out.

STAGE XIV Contemplating Fading away all the time while breathing in-and-out.

STAGE XV Contemplating Cessation all the time while breathing in-and-out.

STAGE XVI Contemplating Relinquishment all the time while breathing in-and-out.

These four stages form a group concerning mental development. In order to train himself in these four stages, the meditator uses a mental object which

becomes manifest, as an object of contemplation instead of the bodily-formation i.e. the breathing, feelings of rapture and bliss, and the mind in different mental states, as mentioned in the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd Tetrads respectively.

In this Tetrad the first point to be noted is that the four things to be contemplated, namely impermanence, fading away, cessation, and relinquishment, do not include the terms unsatisfactoriness (*dukkha*) and no-self (*anattā*).

How is it that the facts of unsatisfactoriness and no-self have not been referred to? Are they not significant here? In this case it should be understood that if a person has fully comprehended impermanence, he will also understand unsatisfactoriness. The comprehension of impermanence together with unsatisfactoriness pierces through the characteristic of no-self. Everything is in flux. There is no 'self' or 'soul' to be grasped at. There is no 'real being' in the whole being of the supposed, so-called individual or person. Look at a flowing 'stream'. We say that there is a stream, that there is water **in the stream**, that the 'stream' flows. But is there really a 'stream' that

flows? He who understands the nature of 'flowing' understands the truth of no-self of 'the stream'. Thus no-self is seen with the seeing of flowing or impermanence of all the material and mental processes (*nāma-rūpa*). Impermanence and no-self, being inter-related, cannot be thought of separately. If one of the three characteristics is seen, the other two are also inevitably understood; this is natural. For this reason in the discourse on *ānāpānasati*, having mentioned only Impermanence, the Buddha passes over to Fading away (*virāga*) without mentioning unsatisfactoriness or no-self by name. In another place,[185] the Buddha says: "Perception of No-self, O Meghiya, appears to the person who has Perception of Impermanence; he who has Perception of No-self attains to the destruction of the conceit 'I am' and thereby experiences *Nibbāna* here and now". This shows that he who has Perception of Impermanence (*anicca-saññā*) attains Nibbāna. The seeing of impermanence (which leads to Nibbāna) is not half-way or vague as is taught in other doctrines: At some places in the Pali scriptures, other teachers, such as Āraka, also used the

185. A. 9. 3 (IV. d. 358).

doctrine of impermanence; but, however elaborate it was, it was shallow and vague compared with what the Buddha meant by impermanence. By contemplation of impermanence in the practice of *ānāpānasati* the meditator gains a deep, clear, and complete vision encompassing the penetration of unsatisfactoriness and no-self. Further, the term 'impermanence' as used by the Buddha has two shades or levels of meaning: Firstly, if used to make a trio with 'unsatisfactoriness' and 'no-self', 'impermanence' is confined only to the meaning 'state of being impermanent'. Secondly, if used alone, it also covers the meaning of the other two terms, (The same applies to the other two terms — any one of the three terms used alone covers the other two). The use of 'impermanence' in the thirteenth Stage of *ānāpānasati* is an example of this.

The practice of the fourth Tetrad as a whole aims essentially at developing Insight (*vipassanā*) or Wisdom (*paññā*) and in this it differs from all the foregoing twelve stages, of which some are concerned with Tranquillity (*samatha*) and some with Tranquillity-plus-Insight. Therefore, for the training in all the four stages of this last Tetrad, it is advised

that the phenomena (*dhamma*) such as impermanence should be contemplated. This Tetrad is given the name *Dhammānupassanā satipaṭṭhāna*[186] and will now be considered step by step.

Stage XIII

(contemplating impermanence)

The guideline for practising the thirteenth Stage is this:

> "Contemplating impermanence, I shall breathe out," thus he trains himself;
>
> "Contemplating impermanence, I shall breathe in," thus he trains himself.

While the meditator is contemplating or seeing impermanence, there is no chance for him to have any evil 'intention' (*cetanā*), that is, he cannot break any moral precepts — thus he trains himself in the

186. The Establishment of Mindfulness consisting in Contemplation of the Phenomena (*dhamma*).

Training of Higher Morality. While contemplating in this way his mind is one-pointed and focussed. He is endowed with the right level of concentration so it can be balanced with wisdom; thus he trains himself simultaneously in the Training of Higher Concentration. Seeing impermanence is in itself fully established in the three aspects of the Training while contemplating impermanence.

Regarding the expression 'contemplating impermanence' these points have to be considered: What is impermanent? In what sense does impermanence manifest itself? How to contemplate impermanence? Who contemplates impermanence? All conditioned things are impermanent; the nature of impermanence is manifested by applying Mindfulness (*sati*). The person who watches closely the nature of impermanence all the time with each breathing in and breathing out is called one who contemplates impermanence.

(1) As an answer to the question "what is impermanent?" the statement "all conditioned things are impermanent" is too brief and vague; it does not help one to understand clearly the distinct practice for contemplating what is impermanent. There must

be a more comprehensive answer to the question. Therefore, as a rule, among meditation practitioners the answer to this question is commonly given like this: The five Aggregates,[187] all six Internal Sense-Bases,[188] and the twelve links of Dependent Origination[189] are impermanent. All these dhammas are to be considered individually:

The first group, the five Aggregates, referring to Materiality, Feeling, Perception, Mental formations and Consciousness, has a wide connotation encompassing every thing in the world, and can be summarized as materiality and mentality. All these things here have the position or status of objects (*ārammaṇa*), that is, things which are seen, heard, done, etc. No matter in how many ways they are divided, they are all comprised in the expression 'the five Aggregates', or 'Mentality and Materiality'. They form in general the object (*ārammaṇa*) of Insight (*vipassanā*).

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187. *Pañca-kkhandhā.*

188. *Ājjhattikāni Ayatanāni.*

189. *Paṭicca-samuppāda.*

The group of six Sense-bases refers to eye, ear, nose, tongue, body, and mind, including the corresponding Consciousness (*viññāṇa*) arisen through each of these six Sense-bases, together with other things which function jointly. All these things have the status of subjects, each performing the corresponding function of seeing, hearing, etc. The five Aggregates as **objects** and the Bases as **subjects** are to be contemplated so that all things in their entirety are included, and the meditator, having seen that both the subjective and the objective worlds are impermanent, does not cling to them. As a result the meditator realizes that form (the object) and the eye, (the subject) are both impermanent. The same applies to the other Sense-bases and their corresponding objects.

The next group, the twelve links of Dependent Origination, signifies the mode or manner of all kinds of conditioned arisings at the moment of seeing a form, hearing a sound, etc. At that time the meditator notes how many different conditioned arisings there are in succession and what modes of conditions are involved in that process of arising. He contemplates each of the modes as impermanent; that is, he observes closely

that Ignorance, the first link, conditions Kamma-formations; Kamma-formations condition Consciousness; Consciousness conditions Mentality-plus-Materiality; Mentality-plus-Materiality conditions the six Sense-bases; these condition Sense-impression; this conditions Feeling; Feeling conditions Craving; Craving Clinging; clinging conditions Process-of-becoming; this conditions Birth and Birth finally conditions Old Age, Death, Sorrow, Lamentation, Pain, Grief and despair. In this way he sees the conditioned arising of different phenomena (*dhammā*). And then he contemplates the conditioned cessation which follows just the opposite pattern of arising; the cessation of Ignorance makes Kamma-formations cease. The cessation of Kamma-formations makes consciousness cease; and so forth until, with the cessation of Birth, Old Age, Death, etc. cease. As with conditioned arising so with conditioned cessation he contemplates each of the twelve modes of cessation and notes, it as impermanent. Thus the meditator sees not only that the six External Bases (*bāhirāni āyatanāni*) such as form, etc. and their corresponding Internal Sense-bases such as eye, etc. are impermanent, but also that the phenomena which arise because of their relation are impermanent as well. In this way he

contemplates exhaustively the impermanence of everything whatsoever.

To conclude the whole topic by way of illustrating again briefly: In the act of seeing a visual form there arise different mental states. To analyse: There is an object or external base, which is the form seen; there is contact with the object of form, the internal base, the eye; there are different modes or manners in which the first two things are related, that is, for instance, the manner in which the eye has contacted the form, the manner in which there arises Eye-consciousness (*cakkhu-viññāṇa*), and the manner in which there happens the coming together of the three (eye, form and eye-consciousness) known as Sense — or Sensorial — impression through eye (*cakkhu-samphassa*). The pattern in which that Sense-impression gives rise to feeling (*cakkhu-samphassajā vedanā*) which in turn conditions Perception, Volition (*saññā*, *Cetanā Vitakka*, *Vicāra*,) etc. and finally one experiences unsatisfactoriness due to their impermanence. Briefly, he knows that the subjective world inside, the objective world outside, and the world resulting from their inter-relationship or inter-action are all impermanent.

It is only through contemplating impermanence in this way that one can pierce through the characteristics of unsatisfactoriness and no-self or voidness (*suññatā*), so that one becomes wearied and finally renounces everything without any clinging.

To sum up the answer to the question "what is impermanence" : (i) There are things which are contacted, (ii) there are things which perform the function of contact, (iii) there are various different modes and manners or patterns in relation to contact. These three categories comprise all that is impermanent, otherwise called conditioned things (*saṅkhāra*). It does not matter in how many ways each of the categories is divided; all must be actually seen as impermanent in the way described above.

(2) How impermanence manifests itself and how to contemplate impermanence: The characteristic or nature of impermanence is manifested essentially in the sense of arising, decaying, and ceasing, as is clear from the Pali scriptures: "All conditioned things are impermanent; they are of the nature of arising and decaying; having arisen they cease to

be."[190] This shows that nothing is in the same state all the time; there is continuous change. This continuous change means there must be arising and ceasing. If there is no cessation there can be no change, no new arising. Therefore, change implies arising, then ceasing, then arising anew in other forms, endlessly. The term 'impermanence' not only shows the process of arising and ceasing but also shows that each new arising is not the same as the preceding arising.

(3) How to contemplate impermanence: There are various stages in which to contemplate it—from shallow to successively deeper and deeper. The very first stage, that is, the earliest way which an ordinary person would understand, is to consider the impermanence of conditioned things (*saṅkhāra*) in groups. For example, consider the five Aggregates which taken together are conventionally called a 'person'. A person is born as a child and then gradually grows up, grows old, and finally dies. Or to analyse, the life span is divided into three periods,

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190. *Aniccā vata saṅkhara uppāda-vaya-dhammino,*
Uppajitvā nirujjhanti (*tasaṃ vūpasamo sukho*).

youth, middle age, and old age, and each period is full of very many changes. However, contemplating or considering this way is still coarse. Things change not only every day, every hour or minute or even second; they are actually changing every single moment (*Citakkhaṇa*). This 'moment' cannot possibly be measured by the ordinary means of measuring time. According to the language of *Abhidhamma*, a moment is so short that it cannot be precisely measured. A *Cittakkhaṇa* (lit. thought moment) is incomparably faster than anything in the world, for instance lightning etc. This means that all things whether material or immaterial or mental are invisibly and continuously changing every thought moment. Each atom of a material or physical body is changing at tremendous speed, not to mention mental things which are changing at a still greater speed. All this amounts to contemplation from the standpoint of time. That is, we take time as the measure to grasp impermanence. The tiniest thing, indivisible as it may be, is subject to instant changes, i.e. in the shortest conceivable length of time.

Further, in the next stage of contemplation, one sees impermanence in a more subtle way: one, sees

that all the different things in the world, whether material or mental, whether within the body or without, all equally depend on one single instant of consciousness (or mind, **citta**, that is, a mind which is performing the function of contacting or sensing an object through the eye, ear, etc.). Different things, are known in the world because there is consciousness sensing them. If no consciousness arises, then the different things in the world are in effect non-existent. On this ground the arising of mind (**i.e. arising of feeling or sensing them**)[191] means therefore the arising of all objects (or their appearing to be felt or sensed).[192] As soon as mind (**citta**) ceases, they too cease, being non-existent for the individual concerned. We can therefore say that everything depends on the mind, is in the power of the mind, or has significance only

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191. Lit. translated: Since mind arises (*i.e. since consciousness of those things arises, or "since mind becomes conscious of those things"*).

192. Lit. translated: Those things arise (*i.e. they appear in the consciousness, or "manifest to the consciousness"*).

because of consciousness or mind, and is always arising and ceasing with the arising and ceasing of consciousness. Thus, since consciousness is something which is arising and ceasing every moment, it follows that all things, whether material or mental, inside-or outside the body, are arising and ceasing every thought-moment too.[193] Contemplating like this, is subtler than the contemplation described in the preceding stage.

Further, at the next stage of contemplation one contemplates in a still deeper way: One sees that different things come into being dependent on many layers of causes and conditions. Impermanence or change is not directly inherent in different things as such but is inherent in their causes and conditions,

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193. cf. "When the Aggregates (which include consciousness or mind as well) arise, decay and die, O Bhikkhu, every moment you are born, decay and die." (*Khandhesu jāyamānesu jīyamānesu mīyamānesu ca khaṇe khaṇe tvaṃ bhikkhu jāyase ca jīyase ca miyase ea Paramat thajotikā, Sāṃaṇerapañha-vaṇṇaṇā*: Prmj. I (PTS) P. 78).

and these are altogether impermanent because they again are dependent on causes and conditions which are again impermanent in themselves, and so on and on. For instance, let one consider why the body changes; one will see that one condition for the sustenance of the body is the supply of food consisting of rice, fish, etc. which are always changing. Why is there change in rice, fish, etc.? Because they are conditioned by elements, climate, etc. which are always changing. Further, elements and climate are conditioned by other things which are in themselves impermanent as well — thus this process goes on endlessly. As the state of flux holds true with regard to material things, it is all the more true of mental processes because they are quicker. To sum up, different things change because they are dependent on conditions which change; and this dependence on conditions goes on in an infinite regress. To see impermanence in this way has a wide meaning, to the extent that one simultaneously penetrates (the characteristics of) suffering or unsatisfactoriness and no-self.

Another way to contemplate impermanence is in the sense that each of the conditioned things consists

itself of many things, each of which can be further and further analysed and finally seen as void. It is only because at times different things come into contact with one another in the right proportions that there come into being phenomena appearing to be something substantial, a soul or self, or something satisfactory and desirable. As soon as the mode of their coming into contact with one another changes, the phenomenon concerned disappears. It should be observed that any kind of combination through which different things come in contact and account for the appearance of a phenomenon, cannot be permanent; it is bound to be broken up and dissolved all the more easily: In the same way, when a group of men are put to work together, differences in opinion will come up all the more easily in proportion to the number of men in the group. As a natural consequence the mode of relationship of the men in the group will be all the more bound to change according to the number of men. The purpose of this illustration is to point out that at this stage one contemplates the impermanence of the mode of combination or relationship of different things as against seeing impermanence in the things themselves as in the preceding stages.

All that has been said is intended to illustrate the nature or characteristic of impermanence from different angles. We shall now further discuss the method of contemplating impermanence.

Generally speaking, to contemplate impermanence means to contemplate and see the arising, continuation, and ceasing of all things. But now it is not intended to give thought to all things, or different phenomena concerning things, and examine them in the light of cause and effect, "**concluding**" that they are impermanent. To do that would merely be dry intellectualization based on rational or logical thinking and having nothing to do with the development of (insight) meditation. This way of rational thinking results in generalizing or formulating theories as may be required by convention; it does not at all result in gaining clear insight or the kind of penetration which gives rise to weariness (*nibbidā*), dispassion (*virāga*), etc. To contemplate in the sense of developing insight one has to turn inward, that is, one has to watch closely different things within, which one has made manifest or actually given rise to, then see the change inherent in those things and note at the same time the

change apparent in one's own mind as well. All this one does first in the present, that is, when things are present before the mental eye, and then one must note how they come to be past. In the same way one sees the present in relation to the future by noting that what one is presently contemplating was future just a thought-moment before. While one is practising like this, one penetrates through the fact of impermanence, thereby thoroughly realizing it.

To illustrate: in the case of contemplating any of the five Aggregates, the meditator must first make the Aggregate become clearly manifest before the mental eye. For instance, while contemplating the body, the meditator has to watch closely a particular aspect of the body, such as the breathing, in order to gain a clear penetration of the fact that the body is impermanent etc., so that there actually arises weariness. This way of direct realization is quite different from thinking about the body by analysing it into innumerable parts, because intellectual analysis does not actually enable one to see the nature of the impermanence of the body. Breath is the element air, which is one of the four elements constituting the body, and is, moreover, the most significant of

all the four. Why? Because if the element air happens to be in disorder the remaining three elements, earth, water, and fire, also come to be in disorder or may even be dissolved. It is most appropriate and wise to contemplate the body in its breathing aspect because breathing is the most significant aspect of the body and is also the one that can be contemplated most conveniently. To contemplate each breathing in and breathing out amounts to contemplating the body directly and closely, and through it (contemplation of breathing) the meditator can gradually penetrate the impermanence etc. of the body and eventually give up clinging to it, as explained earlier (STAGE V). This is all about the way or method which brings one face to face with the thing that one is contemplating, and eventually one can really contemplate it and can truly see it. It should be evident that this (method) is totally, absolutely different from rationalizing about cause and effect, because mere thinking is too far away from the actual realisation of the nature of the body.

Even in the case of contemplating those Aggregates (*khandha*) which are mental (as against the physical one, the form or body), such as feeling, etc.; the same

principles are applied. That is, the meditator must first of all make the feeling become actually manifest before the mental eye, especially by developing concentration until there arises the feeling of Rapture, or Happiness (*pīti*, *sukha*). Having given rise to feeling he should then, in the way mentioned above,[194] watch it closely and contemplate its characteristics of impermanence together with the different causes and conditions which account for the state of impermanence. All this is to show the important fact that in order to contemplate any particular thing one must first make that thing manifest and then watch it with concentrated mind; in this way one will clearly see different characteristics and facts concerning that thing. It serves no practical purpose just to have in mind the name of the thing concerned and ponder it in the light of one's book-learning supported by one's power of imagination and thinking, "it must be like that." No matter how much one is gifted with the power of imagination and uses this gift to know the truth one will just not be able to realize it face to face as can be done through developing insight-meditation as referred to here.

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194. See pp. 487–509.

Even though the things to be contemplated are classified into three groups or divisions (of Aggregates, Sense-bases and Dependent Origination), and even though in each division there are several items as discussed earlier,[195] there is a way of practice through which all these things can simultaneously be seen face to face.

(I) **The Five Aggregates**. We can penetrate the five Aggregates through contemplating the breathing in the manner mentioned earlier: We can penetrate feeling by contemplating Rapture and Happiness arising at the time of practising concentration, or even other kinds of feeling which we are actually experiencing. We can penetrate *Saññā* through contemplating our own perceptions in general, noting how they change. To see in detail, we watch perception arising after feeling (*vedanā*), noting how perception arises, how it changes, how it ceases, etc. To penetrate mental formations (*saṇkhāra*) involves, the same method as in the case of Perception. That is, to see them clearly, we should watch the state of mind, see how it is influ-

195. See pp. 478–486.

enced by thought, no matter of what kind, and should note why and how a certain type of thought has arisen, how it changes and finally how it comes to an end or ceases to be. As for penetrating or "seeing in detail," having given rise to feelings of Rapture and Happiness in the stage of Absorption or otherwise, we watch closely the Perception and Thought (*tal*) caused by those feelings, seeing how they are impermanent with reference to details at the seventh and the eighth Stages (Here it should be understood that by (different kinds of) Thought is meant the Aggregate of Mental Formations.) In order to penetrate the *viññāṇakkhandha* we focus on the act of being clearly conscious of a sense-object which has contacted its corresponding sense-organ, noting why and how consciousness arises, in which way it is manifest and how it ceases to be. However, all this is difficult to do because consciousness arises and ceases too fast. It is better and more convenient to turn to the contemplation of the mind itself, that is, we should closely watch the mind performing different functions. The mind functions sometimes to know objects, sometimes to know feeling, and sometimes to think about various things. The mind is so conditioned that sometimes passion

may, or under other conditions, may not arise; sometimes the mind gives rise to ill-will, delusion, etc. Keeping the above in mind, we must watch closely the states and activities of the mind under all circumstances and at all times. After having observed in this manner, it is possible to conceive of the fifth Aggregate, Consciousness. All other things such as the six External Sense-bases or objects are included in the five Aggregates and have to be seen when actually serving as objects of contact.

(II) **The Six Internal Sense-bases**. The eye, ear, nose, tongue, body, and mind, which perform the function of knowing external objects, follow the same pattern as the five Aggregates. Each Sense-base performs its function to know its corresponding external object. For example, when the eye sees a visual object, and is conscious of it, we notice that prior to seeing the object, it was as if the eye were non-existent, i.e. it was meaningless. But as soon as a visual object comes into contact with the eye, the eye becomes meaningful. This is what is meant by the "eye coming into being". When the eye has fulfilled its function of seeing, it is again as if it did not exist, until another form appears for the eye to see.

In this way we see the birth of the eye (concept), its continuation, and its final passing away. The same principle applies to the ear, nose, tongue, body, and mind. We therefore conclude that we can see the impermanence of each of the Sense-bases only by observing it as it functions.

(III) **Dependent Origination**. The same applies in the case of the different modes of Dependent Origination involving material and mental factors. We can see each mode clearly as impermanent when we closely watch each of the modes while it performs its function. In brief, when the eye comes into contact with form, we should notice how ignorance successively gives rise to the following: (1) thought-formation (Kamma-formation), (2) Consciousness, (3) bodily and mental processes (Mentality-plus-Materiality) (4) the Sense-bases, ready to perform their several functions, (5) each Sense-impression in its totality, (6) Feelings, (7) desire or Craving with regard to Feelings, (8) strong, intense Clinging, (9) creative activity, (10) Birth of processes, and finally (11) decaying and fading away (aging and death), as well as other kinds of suffering such as Sorrow, Lamentation, etc. All this is called the com-

plete working out of the various inter-dependent modes of Dependent Origination. Each factor, arising from Ignorance, gives rise to a following factor, which gives rise to another factor, etc. On the whole, we must contemplate closely the impermanence of each of the modes while it is actually performing its function and undergoing successive conditioning. That is, we can penetrate Ignorance which gives rise to thought-formations because of our delusion. We also can penetrate thought-formations as they really are at the time they condition consciousness, in their capacity of something dynamic, always endowed with creative power. And we can penetrate Consciousness as it is, only when it conditions the functioning of bodily and mental processes. Consciousness gives rise to certain bodily and mental processes appropriate to its nature. By the power of the element of consciousness (*viññāṇa-dhātu*), the functioning of bodily and mental processes is carried out. If there is the element of Consciousness alone, it cannot create anything. But when it comes into contact with body and mind, it manifests its power. In the same way, the mental and bodily processes do not, if they are dissociated from consciousness, come into exist-

ence, because one has no bodily or mental feeling without consciousness. Further, we can really know body and mind only when they are manifest in feelings through the Sense-bases of eye, ear, nose, tongue, body and mind. Mind and body make these Sense-bases the basis of Feeling. Even with regard.

This section should be read after this [Anapanasati - Mindfulness of Breathing]

By Buddhadasa Bhikkhu
Translated by Bhikkhu Nagasena

THE FOURTH TETRAD:

DHAMMANUPASSANA

SATIPATTHANA

(From the Contemplation of Impermanence up to the

Contemplation of Tossing Back All *Sankhāras*)

Now we come to the practice of the Fourth Tetrad of *Ānāpānasati*, which discusses the last four stages of Mindfulness With Breathing, as follows:

XIII. Continually **contemplating impermanence** while breathing in and out;

XIV. Continually **contemplating fading away** while breathing in and out;

XV. Continually **contemplating total quenching** while breathing in and out;

XVI. Continually **contemplating letting go** while breathing in and out.

These four stages together form the tetrad of mental development which examines Dhamma (Truth, Reality) — that is, truths which manifest themselves as objects to train upon — rather than scrutinizing the body (the breath), feelings (*pīti* and *sukha*), and the mind according to its different features, as was done in the first, second, and third tetrads, respectively.[1]

[1] For a discussion of the first three tetrads see Mindfulness With Breathing: Unveiling the Secrets of Life (details in "Books & Tapes" section).

In this the fourth tetrad, the first point of interest is that the Buddha mentioned four *dhammas*: *aniccaṁ* (impermanence), *virāga* (fading away), *nirodha* (quenching), and *paṭinissagga* (letting go), without saying anything about *dukkhaṁ* and *anatta*. Thoughtful people will raise their eyebrows at this and wonder whether or not unsatisfactoriness and not-self are of any importance. We should understand that they are of great importance, but in this instance, the Buddha included them both within *aniccaṁ* because of the fact that, if we fully realize impermanence, we will naturally realize *dukkhaṁ* within it; and if we fully realize both impermanence and unsatisfactoriness, then we'll realize *anattā* – that there is nothing to attach to as "self" or as "ourself." For example, when we see water flowing, then we naturally see the fact that the water carries various things with it, or that this single-minded flowing of water doesn't listen to anyone. This example illustrates how these three facts are inseparably associated. In essence, when we fully see one characteristic, we must also see the remaining two included with it. For this reason the Buddha spoke only of *aniccaṁ*, then passed on to *virāga* and *nirodha* without mentioning *dukkhaṁ* and *anattā* specifically. In another place, the Pali scriptures record that the Buddha said: "Medhiya, perception of not-self (*anattā-saññā*) appears to one who has perception of impermanence (*anicca-saññā*); one who perceives not-self removes ego conceit (*asmimāna*) and experiences *nibbāna* here and now (*diṭṭha-dhamma*)." This shows that the Blessed One held that when there is perception of impermanence there is perception of not-self, ego-conceit is abandoned, and *nibbāna* is realized. To put it more succinctly, one who perceives impermanence realizes that very *nibbāna*.

It must be understood, however, that contemplation here is no partial perception of impermanence like in other, non-Buddhist sects, as mentioned in the Pali texts. Although some sects spoke of *aniccaṁ* in detail, for example, that of the teacher Araka, their manner of realizing impermanence no matter how sophisticated is not what we're speaking of here. That is still a kind of *aniccaṁ* which is external to the Buddha's teaching. Therefore, the realization of impermanence in the thirteenth stage of *ānāpānasati* has it's own specific meaning, different from that of other teachers in other places. Here we see more deeply to the degree of *dukkhaṁ* and *anattā*. This meaning of *aniccaṁ* appears in many other places in the scriptures, even though the general meaning refers to *aniccaṁ* alone. We should follow the following standard:

whenever all three characteristics are mentioned, *aniccaṁ* then has the narrow meaning, referring only to itself;

when only *aniccaṁ* is mentioned, know that the Buddha included *dukkhaṁ* and *anattā* with it.

The Buddha gave us this standard for use in cases such as this thirteenth stage of *ānāpānasati*.

Ānāpānasati's fourth tetrad, in essence, is purely *vipassanā* (insight) and *paññā* (wisdom), unlike the previous stages which are either *samatha* (tranquility) or *samatha* mixed with *vipassanā*. Therefore, this tetrad of the practice of *ānāpānasati*, which begins with scrutinizing impermanence, is known as the Contemplation of *Dhamma* Foundation of Mindfulness (*dhammānupassanā-satipaṭṭhāna*) which we will now consider step by step.

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CHAPTER 17:

LESSON THIRTEEN OF *ăNăPăNASATI*

(Continually Contemplating Impermanence)

The object or topic of the thirteenth lesson of *ānāpānasati*, the first lesson of the fourth tetrad, is:[2]

"That *bhikkhu*, trains himself: continually contemplating impermanence, I will breathe in;

Trains himself, continually contemplating impermanence, I will breathe out."[3]

The words "trains himself" here, should be taken to mean that when impermanence is seen there is no opportunity to concoct any immoral volition. Thus, one is unable to violate any moral precept and there is automatic *sīla-sikkhā*. While contemplating in the manner of this lesson, there is the kind of *samādhi* which is closely connected with *paññā* and equal to its strength, and so *citta-sikkhā* is included, also. Peering into or penetrating[4] the *aniccalakkhaṇa* (characteristic of

[2] "Lesson" translates a Thai word (khan) which usually means step, stage, or level. As many Western meditators tend to be impatient and see "steps" as things to hurriedly climb, we use the word "lesson" and emphasize that these are lessons to study for one's entire life.

[3] Aniccánupassí assasissámíti sikkhati;
Aniccánupassí passasissámíti sikkhati.
(Änápánasati-Sutta, M.iii.82.)

[4] The Thai word peng is used to translate the Pali word jháyati (the verb form of jhána) which is hard to render. It can mean to stare, to fix upon, to peer at or into, to focus upon, to hunt after. We use penetrate here because it relates to paññá and insight, and to getting deeply into natural facts.

impermanence) is already *paññā-sikkhā*. Thus, our *bhikkhu* is complete in the threefold training while practicing this step.

Regarding the words "continually contemplating impermanence," that is, *aniccānupassī*,[5] the following questions must be considered:

1. What things are impermanent?
2. What is the nature of the condition of impermanence?
3. How do we contemplate impermanence?
4. Who is "the contemplator of impermanence" (the *aniccānupassī*)?

For a start, we may answer that all *sankhāras* (concocted things) are the impermanent things. Originating, existing, and ceasing are the conditions of impermanence. Using *sati* to scrutinize[6] the fact of impermanence is *aniccānupassanā* (contemplation of impermanence). The person who does this with every inhalation and exhalation is named "*aniccānupassī*" (one who continually contemplates impermanence).[7]

Now, we'll consider the things that have the condition of impermanence.

I. WHAT THINGS ARE IMPERMANENT?

A succinct and comprehensive reply is that all *sankhāras* are the things which are impermanent. Such an answer, however, is not very useful for the practical examination of

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[5] Aniccánupassí is formed from anicca, impermanence; anu, along, after; and passa, one who sees; thus: "the one who sees and looks into impermanence," "the contemplator of impermanence."

[6] Kamnod (Thai): to scrutinize, to focus attention on, to fix or set (a date), to observe, to note.

[7] The first three questions will be examined in detail. The fourth need not.

impermanence. We require a clearer answer than that. Thus, while speaking within the boundaries of this step of developing *ānāpānasati* and when asked what things are impermanent, the "experts"[8] replied with the principle that the five *khandhas,* the six inner *āyatanas*, and the twelve modes of *paṭicca-samuppāda* are the things which are impermanent. Their intention was that we take up these *dhammas* for examination one by one and group by group.

A. THE FIVE *KHANDHAS*: This first group consists of *rūpa, vedanā, saññā, sankhāra*, and *viññāṇa*. This is a broad and general examination encompassing the many things of this world. We can speak even more concisely of *nāma* and *rūpa*, which, nonetheless, refer to all things in the world, both mental and material. All of these things are considered to be categories of sense objects, that is, the things watched, seen, heard, listened to, smelled, thought, etc. and including the objects of all actions. No matter how many dozens or hundreds of categories we arrange them in, they are always included in the terms "five *khandhas*" or "*nāma-rūpa*." These are the general objects of *vipassanā*.

B. THE SIX INTERNAL SENSES: This second group consists of the eyes, ears, nose, tongue, body, and mind-sense, together with the consciousness *(viññāṇa*) which arises at the six sense doors, and including the other things which arise in conjunction with the senses. All of these things are arranged within the categories of "Actors" and "The Subjects of Actions," namely, watcher, listener, smeller, taster, thinker, and the other contactors of the above mentioned sense objects. That side consists of the objects or receivers of the sense activity; this side consists of the subjects or doers. The experts advised us to examine both groups in order to completely and finally see the utter impermanence of both groups. Then, we won't attach to either. Thus for example, when the eyes see a form, observe that the form which is the object seen is impermanent, and that the eyes which are the subjects seeing are impermanent.

C. THE TWELVE MODES[9] OF DEPENDENT ORIGINATION: This last group focuses on every aspect or process of conditioning which interdependently arises in the moment, for example, of seeing a form. In that moment, no matter how many levels of concocting there are and how many factors are involved, each one must be examined to see impermanence. Every movement in the process must be

[8] The ancient meditation masters and subsequent commentators, shorthand for accepted traditional knowledge.

[9] Äkára, Tan Ajahn uses this term frequently and in a variety of ways, but we have had difficulty translating it properly. Literally, it means "the (way of) making," way of acting or being, mode, condition, factor. We alternately translate ákára as mode, condition, movement, and factor. (ET)

observed and fully seen: *avijjā* (ignorance) conditions *sankhāra* (mental concocting); *sankhāra* concocts *viññāṇa* (consciousness), consciousness concocts *nāmarūpa* (mind-body), *nāmarūpa* concocts the *saḷāyatanas* (six senses), the senses concoct *phassa* (contact), contact concocts *vedanā* (feeling), feeling concocts *taṇhā* (desire), desire concocts *upādāna* (attachment), attachment concocts *bhava* (existence), existence concocts *jāti* (birth), birth concocts ageing and death (*jarāmaraṇa*), sorrow, lamentation, grief, pain, and so on, all of which are the arising side of dependent origination, the side which concocts *dukkha*. As for the modes of the quenching side of dependent origination, the same approach is used but in the opposite direction, that is, in the direction of inducing quenching: the quenching of ignorance quenches *sankhāra*, the quenching of *sankhāra* quenches *viññāḷa*, the quenching of consciousness quenches *nāmarūpa*, and so on until the quenching of birth leads to the quenching of ageing, death, and the rest, so that the whole thing, including *dukkha*, finishes. The twelve modes in the arising side and the twelve modes in the quenching side must be brought under examination so that the impermanence of each mode is seen. In other words, when seeing the external *āyatanas*, such as forms; the inner *āyatanas*, such as the eyes; and the fact that the interaction between the two *āyatanas* leads to the arising of a variety of other conditions, realize that all of these things are impermanent. This leads to the complete, clear cut realization that everything is impermanent. Such a realization is more complete and final than can be examined in any other way.

To summarize in one more brief example, when the eyes see a form, there arise various experiences in sequence. We can distinguish three sides to our examination: (1) the object or external *āyatana*, the form, which is seen; (2) the subject or inner *āyatana*, the eyes and all of the nervous system concerned with vision; and (3) the different conditions which arise out of the relationship between the two, such as, the movement of the eyes being stimulated by form, the movement causing eye-consciousness to be born, the movement of contact between these three things ("eye-contact"), and the movement in which eye-contact causes *vedanā* (as *cakkhusamphassajāvedanā*) and the movement of *vedanā* concocting the arising of perception, volition, thought, pondering, and so forth on up to the making of actions (*kamma*) and receiving the results of actions in the myriad kinds of *dukkha*. All of these movements, conditions, stages, and aspects must be investigated and seen as nothing but impermanence, just as with the outer and inner *āyatanas*. In short, realize the impermanence of the external *āyatanas*, of the internal *āyatanas*, and of all the conditions related to them.

Only by realizing the impermanence of these things in this manner will we reach a genuine realization of *dukkhaṁ, anattā*, and *suññatā* which in turn leads to disenchantment (being fed up) and the fading away (dissolution) of desire. Any approach other than this is just a half-baked understanding of impermanence in which one gets stuck at that point, the same as with the seeing of impermanence in sects outside of Buddhism, as discussed above.

To summarize the point under consideration here once again, when asking "What is impermanent?" the answer is: things which are experienced, the things which perform the function of experiencing, and the various modes and conditions associated with that experience. These three categories together comprise all the things which are impermanent, which we like to call "all *sankhāras*." Analyzing these things into dozens or hundreds of categories is not important. The only important matter is to see the impermanence of the *sankhāras* truly, in the way explained here.

II. WHAT IS THE CHARACTERISTIC OF IMPERMANENCE?

The essence of this matter is found directly within the phenomena of arising, the phenomena of decay, and the phenomena of cessation, which in Pali is expressed, "All things are impermanent, naturally arising and passing away; once they arise, they cease."[10] This quotation exactly expresses the meaning of impermanence. Things do not exist in a single unchanging state forever, rather they are continuously changing. When there is change, there naturally must be arising and ceasing. If there is no cessation, change leading to new kinds of arising could not happen. Thus, the word "change" means arising then ceasing in order to arise anew in other forms endlessly. For this reason, the word "impermanence" has two meanings:

1. continual arising and ceasing,
2. No arising repeats itself due to the new causes and conditions which are continuously intervening.

In order to see the meaning of "impermanence," both meanings must be investigated until seen clearly and truly.

III. THE LEVELS OF CONTEMPLATING IMPERMANENCE

[10] Aniccá vata sa°khárá uppádavayadhammino uppajjhitvá nirujjhanti. (Maháparinibbána-Sutta, Digha-Nikáya)

What are the different levels of contemplating impermanence? Impermanence can be examined on successively deeper levels of contemplation. The first and easiest level, which anyone can see, is to observe the impermanence of groups of *sankhāras*. We take groups because they're easy to see. For example, in a collection of aggregates which we call a "human being," we easily see birth as a child, growth up to old age, and death. Or to break this into smaller parts, we can separate human life into three stages: youth, middle-age, and old age. Then we specifically observe that even in one stage of life there is plenty of change. However, observing in this way is still coarse. We must know how to examine in such detail that we don't see those things as changing only everyday, or every hour, or every minute, or even every second, but that they change every mind-moment. A mind-moment is a period of time which can't be measured by the usual standards explainable in everyday language. In Dhamma Language, in the ultimate sense, however, mind-moment denotes a period of time which is extremely short, so short that we can't be aware of the divisions between them. We probably can't explain this in a way that can be directly understood. We must use comparisons which can't really be made, such as, faster than a lightning flash. This is as deep and detailed as we can go, such that the eye can't see the changes happening in material and mental things with every mind moment. Every material atom is in tumultuous change, too fine for the eye to see; and the mental elements are even more finely and rapidly changing than the material. All of these are ways to look at change from the viewpoint of time. We use time to grab things so that change can be seen from this perspective, which is related to measurement. This leads us to say there is change in even the smallest thing, that which can't be divided any further, and in the shortest period of time which we can conceive.

Another method for contemplating impermanence, one more refined than the first, is to contemplate that each and every thing in the world, whether material or mental, whether outside the body or inside it, arises before a single mind, namely, that mind which is acting in contact with or in awareness of that thing. Whatever the sense door (eye, ear, etc.), we only experience that the thing is in the world because mind is aware of it. Without mind, it would be as if that thing didn't exist. Thus we can say that because there is mind, there is that thing; because mind arises (that is, in awareness of those things), that thing arises (appears to awareness). When mind ceases, that thing ceases also, and has no more value for the person involved than non-existent things. For this particular reason, we say that all things always depend on mind, are within the power of mind, have significance only in regard to mind, and arise and cease following mind. Therefore, as mind is a thing which arises and ceases from moment to moment, all of those things only have meaning as things which arise and cease with each mind-moment. We should not forget that this is true whether they are material or mental, outside the body or within it. This approach is a more subtle realization of the characteristic of impermanence.

Another means by which we can successively see impermanence more deeply is to see that each thing is compounded by levels of causes (*hetu*) and conditions (*paccaya*). Impermanence, or change, from this perspective isn't directly there in that thing, but is in the causes and conditions which concoct it. In turn, those causes and conditions are absolutely impermanent, for they too are conditioned by another level of

impermanent causes and conditions. Let's look at this example: Why do the skin and flesh of human beings change? They change because they arise from food which is itself impermanent and changing, for food originates from elements and weather conditions which are also constantly changing. Weather, too, has it's origins in other causes and conditions which are endlessly changing. (There is no end to backtracking through successive levels of causes and factors.) When material phenomena are like this, mental phenomena are even more so, because the are lighter and quicker than the material phenomena. In summation, each thing changes because it is established upon other things, which are also changing in endless causal succession. Seeing *aniccaṁ* in this manner expands to include the realization of *dukkhaṁ* and *anattā* within it.

A further method is to contemplate impermanence with the meaning that each *sankhāra* is conditioned by many other things. Each of these things can be further divided into smaller parts *ad infinitum* until they are nothing. Only because there is, in each moment, a coincidence or relationship appropriate to the conditions, does any given *sankhāra* appear to be a "self," or an individual entity, or something desirable and satisfying. Whenever the relationship of things transforms in some other way, the lucky coincidence breaks up and dissolves. Please notice that the movement whereby many things come together in a relationship cannot result in any permanent entity. Rather, these compounds break up and change more easily than ever. When many people work together, the cases in which differences of opinion occur is proportional to the amount of people involved. The impermanence of the relationship increases as sure as a shadow follows a body. The aim here is to point out that the impermanence of relationship is different than the previous point made. Here, impermanence is seen within the very thing which is observed. We've now brought up enough examples to point out varying forms of the characteristic of impermanence. Next, we must consider the ways of contemplating impermanence.

IV. THE METHOD OF INVESTIGATION

The general way to examine impermanence is to see the arising, existing, and ceasing of all things. However, our objective here is not to send the mind off to examine everything, ponder them and related matters with our reasoning, and then conclude or deduce that they are "impermanent." That is something for philosophers and logicians to do, not for cultivators of the mind. That approach results merely in the different theories and standards which have been laid down by thinkers over the years, but doesn't result in the clear, penetrating realization which leads to disenchantment (*nibbidā*) and fading away (*virāga*).

The way of contemplation which fits with mental cultivation must turn inward. It focuses upon the things which are existing within, which one actually has caused to appear or to arise within oneself. Then,

observe the transformation that manifests within those things and simultaneously manifests in one's experience of those things in the mind.

All of this must happen in the present. First, they are directly present to us; then they become past. Or compare them against the about-to-happen future by observing that the present we are scrutinizing was something future just a moment ago. When we practice in this way, we will penetrate into and soak up the fact of impermanence genuinely and totally.

When, for example, we contemplate one of the five *khandhas*, we first must cause the actual thing to appear. When observing *rūpa-khandha* (form aggregate), we take one specific component of the body which is vital for the body's existence. This is why the Buddha advised taking the breathing as the body, or *rūpa-khandha*, in the early stages of *ānāpānasati*, so that we can gain clear, penetrating understanding of the fact that the body is impermanent and so on, until there is genuine disenchantment and dispassion. This is altogether different from contemplating with the mouth - such as, repeating "body, body" endlessly - or dividing the body into more details and facts than we can keep track of. Neither of these intellectual "examinings" is capable of reaching the real body and its impermanence.

The breath is wind-element, that is, one element of the four elements which make up the body. More significantly, it is the most important *paccaya* (condition, influence, support) of all the bodies - those consisting of earth-element, water-element, and fire-element[11] - which make up the body. If the breath is just slightly abnormal, the other parts will be affected, possibly even damaged. Therefore, taking the breath as the part of the body to contemplate is the most intelligent and appropriate thing to do, because using this essence or reality of the body is the most important, as well as the most convenient. Focusing on every inhalation and exhalation is equal to directly focusing on the body's reality in the most intimate way possible. One might even be able to contemplate its impermanence and other characteristics to the fullest extent, as was explained in the earlier lessons of *ānāpānasati*.

All of this forms a skillful means (*upāya*) which enables us to penetrate to the thing we are observing, to observe it genuinely, and finally to see it in its utmost reality. Anyone can see that this is not the same as memorization, recitation, and logical calculation, none of which can be compared with genuine contemplation, for they are too far away from the reality that we call "*kāya*" (body).

[11] Representing, respectively, the physical properties of dimension ("eating space"), cohesion, and temperature. Wind-element represents movement.

Even when examining one of the mental *khandhas*, such as *vedanā*, the principal is identical. First, we must cause feeling to actually appear to the mind, in particular, by developing *samādhi* so that the feelings of *pīti* and *sukha* arise. Then, search out and observe the characteristic of impermanence and the causes of impermanence, as discussed in the above section about the conditions of impermanence[12]. All of this points to the importance of the fact that contemplating something requires that we first must make that thing appear in order to look into it with the concentrated mind. Then the characteristics and facts associated with that thing will be seen with certainty. Merely thinking of something's name, remembering and pondering all the details and facts we've been taught about it, then piling on our own reasoning and conjectures that "it must be like this and like that" is the method of scholars and academics. No matter how much we examine something in this intellectual way, it will not lead to a thoroughly convincing experience of truth, unlike the method we are discussing here.

THREE WAYS OF PRACTICE

FOR GETTING TO THE ESSENCE OF THOSE THINGS

We have already categorized the objects of contemplation into three groups, each of which has many, many sub-groups; nonetheless, there is a way of practice which will get to the heart of all of the things in those groups. We can apply this method to each of the three categories.

A. Five *Khandhas*: We get to the heart of the *rūpa-khandha* (form aggregate) by scrutinizing the breath as explained earlier.[13] We can reach the essence of *vedanā-khandha* (feeling aggregate) by concentrated examintion of the *pīti* (rapture) and *sukha* (bliss) that arise when there is *samādhi*. We can also use any other feelings which truly arise in oneself, that actually manifest to the mind. In a coarse way, we get to the essence of *saññā* by examining the recognitions and evaluations which are occurring within ourselves and see how these are changing. The more refined way is to fix on the things which arise out of *vedanā*: the perceptions, recognitions, and evaluations of the feelings. We consider the manner of their existence, that is, how they arise, change, and pass away.

[12] Section II.

[13] Chapters IV through XII, which cover the first four lessons of ánápánasati. (Not translated here.)

To reach the essence of *sankhāra-khandha*, use the same method as with *saññā*. In a general way, we fix on the mind which is involved in thinking (*vitakka*: it doesn't matter what the thinking is about), then we examine why it is that the mind thinks and how thoughts arise, change, function, and cease. The more refined way is to cause *vedanā* to arise, such as the *pīti* or *sukha* of *jhāna*, then vigilantly guard and observe the perceptions and thinking which arise toward those feelings. Experience their impermanence in the way described under lessons seven and eight of *ānāpānasati*. The thinking (*vitakka*) just mentioned is what we mean by *sankhāra-khandha*.

With viññāṇa-khandha, in general, we examine the clear and immediate seeing or knowing of any object which contacts the inner sense bases. Regarding this clear seeing or knowing: due to what causes and by what conditions does it arise? How does it appear? and how does it cease? But all of this is very difficult to do, because it happens too quickly. It is better, more subtle, and more convenient to examine that mind itself. Scrutinize the mind as it performs its complex duties: now - functioning as consciousness of the object; now - functioning as consciousness of vedanā; now - functioning as thinking in various ways; now -the further conditioning which leads to lust or freedom from lust, hatred or freedom from hatred, delusion or freedom from delusion, to give a few examples. In this way, we scrutinize the mental behavior, the mind's activity of all kinds, in all periods, and in all its different forms. This is the most certain and complete contemplation of the consciousness aggregate. All of the possible sense objects (the six external āyatanas) are covered by the term "five aggregates." They must be examined in the exact moment in which they function as objects of sense contact (phassa).

B. Internal Sense Bases: The eyes, ears, nose, tongue, body, and mind make up the group of things (inner *āyatanas*) which experience the sense objects (outer *āyatanas*). Here, the principle remains the same as above: contemplate during the actual moment of experiencing the object, at whichever sense door it appears. For example, let's take the eyes seeing a form, the eyes genuinely experiencing a form. Before this, in a moment when the eyes have not yet seen any form, it is as if the eyes didn't exist. In such a moment, the eyes have no meaning whatsoever. But when a form makes contact, it is as if the eyes instantly arise. This is called the "birth" of the eyes, which continue to exist as long as the form is seen. When the seeing ends, the eyes cease. Then, it is as if the eyes don't exist, until a new form comes along to make a new contact. In this way, we can clearly examine and perceive the arising, continuing, and ceasing of the eyes. It is the same with the ears, nose, tongue, body, and mind. Thus, we can say that we must see them in the moment of functioning, and only then, in order to genuinely see them and their impermanence.

C. The Modes of Dependent Origination: Regarding the various modes which interact and concoct among material and mental phenomena, which we call "*paṭicca-samuppāda*" (dependent origination), the standard is the same as above. In order to scrutinize each of these modes and their impermanence, we must

examine them in the exact moment of their activity, and only then. Once again using the example of the eyes contacting a form, we must see the following: In that moment of contact between the eyes and a form, how is our *avijjā* (ignorance) present? How does this ignorance push on to condition *sankhāra* (concocting, mental activity)? How is the force that causes mental activity conditioned? How then is *viññāṇa* (consciousness) made to appear? How then is the appearance of *nāmarūpa* (mind-body) conditioned? How are the *āyatanas* (senses) conditioned so as to perform their functions? In what way is *phassa* (contact) conditioned so that its function is complete? Then, how is *vedanā* (feeling) conditioned? By what means is the wanting and desiring (*taṇhā*) related to that feeling conditioned into arising? How does attachment to that thing come to be completely formed? How does this lead to the becoming or existence of some "story" and then to *jāti* (birth)? Finally, how does the degeneration known as ageing and death, along with the various other forms of *dukkha*, such as sorrow and grief, come about? These are the modes of one complete cycle in the dependent origination of *dukkha*.

We must examine all of these factors exactly when each is conditioning the next factor, when each is involved in the process, in order to see each one in its reality. See the reality of ignorance in the moment that it functions through the power of its stupidity and not-knowing to concoct the mental activity. See the reality of concocting in the moment that it acts to condition consciousness through the power of *sankhāras* inability to keep still once it has arisen and its need to continually concoct. We will see actual consciousness, when it conditions, through the natural power of the consciousness-element (*viññāṇa-dhātu*), the arising of the sort of mind-body which completely fulfills the meaning of the word "mind-body." By itself, the consciousness-element has no effect, but when it comes into relation with the thing called "mind-body," then it expresses its marvelous influences through that mind-body. The mind-body is the same. Without its reliance on consciousness-element, it could not arise as mind-body, because there would be no consciousness of either the material or mental elements. And we know actual mind-body only when it functions as the sense bases or as consciousness through the sense bases, that is, when the eyes, ears, nose, tongue, body, and mind are foundations for the arising of sense consciousness. Even with contact, feeling, desire, attachment, becoming, birth, and each kind of *dukkha* (such as ageing and death), the meanings and explanations are the same. We know the reality of each thing when that thing is actually performing its function of causing an effect, namely, some new thing. Here we say it concocts the other thing. This is how we can see, with certainty, the reality and impermanence of each thing.

We must not forget that all of this must be observed in the mind, only in our actual awareness. The practice of the third tetrad of *ānāpānasati*[14] will help a great deal here. It helps us to see more easily the twists, trickery, and conditioning of the mind, because more than a few of the modes of dependent

[14] Contemplation of the mind: experiencing its many "states," delighting it, concentrating it, and liberating it.

origination are included there. When we have practiced as is described here, then we will clearly see that ignorance itself is impermanent, the act of concocting mental activity is impermanent, the mental activity which is concocted is impermanent, and so on, mode by mode for the entire cycle of dependent origination. It should be mentioned that this examination of impermanence is finer, more subtle, and more detailed than the examination described in Section A, where we focused exclusively on the external sense objects, and in Section B, where we focused exclusively on the internal sense bases.

SUMMARY: In the contemplation of impermanence, we must concentrate upon and examine actual, existing things. First, we cause each thing to manifest clearly. Then we observe how it arises and from what it arises; how it is established and what its function is in that moment; and finally, how and due to what causes it ceases. Contemplating impermanence from the perspective of dependent origination is more detailed and refined than all other methods.

CONTEMPLATING *DUKKHAM*

We've been discussing methods of contemplating impermanence alone, however, true experience of impermanence finds *dukkhaṁ* and *anattā* within that impermanence. How does this happen? Seeing the deeper aspects of impermanence, so that we also see *dukkhaṁ*, can be categorized according to various meanings of the word *dukkhaṁ*. We will look at three of these meanings.

A. *Dukkhaṁ* as "Enduring Suffering": In the word *dukkhaṁ*, many meanings can be inferred. It is composed of two components: *du* and *kha* (or *khaṁ*). If we take *du* to mean "difficult: and *khama* to mean "endure," then *dukkhaṁ* means "difficult to endure." We will see this clearly when we observe that impermanence means *jāti*, *jāra*, and *maraṇa* (birth, old age, and death). If there was permanence and no change, then how could there be birth, decrepitude, and death? The *dukkha* that arises through birth, old age, and death arises directly out of impermanence and change. Further forms of *dukkha*, such as sorrow, lamentation, grief, and despair are all due to the fact that things don't happen as we wish. We don't get the things that we desire, we experience things that we do not want, and we are always separated from the things we do want. The cause of this comes from the fact that all animals and all conditioned things are constantly changing according to their causes and conditions.

Even the miscellaneous, everyday *dukkha* of householders, such as cold, heat, hunger, thirst; and the need to eat, bathe, and excrete; exists only because the body is a compound of many impermanent and conditioned things (*sankhāras*). We change with every mind movement. We need this, we need that, we

need to change in this way and in that way - all the time. This causes all sorts of concerns about the care of the body, which again shows clearly that these difficulties which we must bear are due to the change of the body.

When we observe that *dukkha* is disease, whether of children or adults, of healthy or vulnerable people, we realize that these too are because of the changes in the *sankhāras* that form and surround the body. If there was nothing changing, illness probably wouldn't occur.

There is the *dukkha* of having to eat food, wear clothing, and use shelter. We must try to earn a living in order to acquire them. We must suffer through exhausting hardships. Or we struggle and compete with others in many ways until we end up quarrelling and becoming enemies. Even these forms of *dukkha* are caused by the endless impermanence and change of the body, of the mind, of the mental defilements, of desire, and of learning, all of which are *sankhāras* just the same. So we must say that even these forms of *dukkha* are caused by the change of conditioned things. When we observe change with clarity, we clearly see, as a matter of course, that *dukkha* must arise within that change.

Now, if we look at mental phenomena in more detail, that is, examine the *dukkha* that comes from the burning of the mental defilements (lust, hatred, delusion, etc.), which cause beings to anxiously struggle in search of peace and happiness, we will probably find that they are directly caused by impermanence, also. This first type, which can be seen easily in livestock, is bodily changes. When the body grows to a certain point, or reaches a certain place in its cycle, various sexual problems occur. These cannot be avoided. They are caused by natural, bodily changes. On a higher level, there are changes which are outside of nature. Eating and living improve. Learning and thinking broaden and expand. The problems about sexual matters and mental impurities change accordingly. As they become more intricate and complex, the *dukkha* caused by them also grows more complicated. This is mental change. When the bodily and mental changes come together, it is a natural foundation for *dukkha*, because we're extensively and profoundly burned from two sides. But we look in the opposite direction and overlook the truth that this *dukkha* is the result of change and the delusions of the defilements, which are also derived from bodily and mental change. If anyone sets his mind to scrutinizing these physical and mental changes within himself, he will clearly see the sort of *dukkha* that we are talking about. One will see it as solely a result of change, or as a thing changing within itself, and will no longer be deluded by the deceptions of change. Then one will solve problems in an undefiled way. Otherwise, the problems will grow heavier and unsolvable, and will become more and more destructive for oneself.

If we go still deeper and examine the *dukkha* that arises from having to receive the effects of our actions, or that happen due to the diverse actions of all beings, we will still see that it is a matter of change. Actions are impermanent, are things which change. Therefore, the results of actions are impermanent; they change just the same as the actions. The doers of the actions are impermanent things. Receiving the effects of the actions is impermanent. Everything is always changing, consequently we humans receive the fruits of actions according to the circumstances of change. When receiving the fruit of evil actions, we suffer openly. When receiving the fruit of good actions, we suffer most secretly, so that we're not even aware that it is torment. But both of these, whether hell or heaven, equally mean that we must endure whirling around within the flow of *saṁsāra* (cycling around through death and birth). All of this can be called impermanence or the results of impermanence, but their value is the same - the *dukkha* of change. The more we contemplate, the more we'll see that the more there is change, the more there is *dukkha*, because that change is not peaceful. Happiness is a kind of change; consequently, it can't really be happiness. It can only be the kind of *dukkha* that deludes and deceives us enough for us to misunderstand it.

When we contemplate *dukkha* to its furthest degree, on the level which is its essence, which the Buddha expressed: "In summary, the five *khandhas* compounded with attachment are *dukkha*," we see most fully, once again, that it directly originates from impermanence. Attachment to the five *khandhas* is *dukkha*, because the *khandhas* are impermanent. The very impermanence of the *khandhas* is what causes any one who attaches to them to experience *dukkha* directly. Another thing which should not be forgotten is that attachment is also impermanent, or, if we speak conventionally, the individual who attaches is impermanent. When the object of attachment and all things involved with it are solely impermanent things, the condition of *dukkha* is something that cannot be avoided. All of this shows that impermanent things naturally produce the condition of suffering from out of themselves and within themselves all the time. This causes suffering within these things and for any person who attaches to them, the two being unavoidable and inseparable. This is the first meaning of *dukkhaṁ*.

B. *Dukkhaṁ* as "Disgusting to See": If we take *du* to mean "ugly" or "evil" and *kha* (from *ikkha*) to mean "look," then this aspect has the meaning "once seen, it is ugly." When one really sees it, it's abhorrent and repulsive. The meaning of this aspect of *dukkhaṁ* is that the more we observe it, the uglier it gets; the deeper we see, the more repulsive it becomes. No matter what group of *sankhāras* is observed, it will grow more disgusting as we see more deeply into its impermanence, into the illusion of those *sankhāras*. This feeling of hate or repulsion is one more side of *dukkhaṁ*.

When we say that all compounded things (*sankhāras*) are *dukkhaṁ*, it means that all *sankhāras*, when truly seen for what they are, are repulsive. In what way are they repulsive? They are repulsive in their impermanence, in their violent change with every mind moment, and in their condition which deludes us

into mistaking them for permanent substances. Simultaneously, the condition of suffering is thrown and poured in without pause or let up for the owner of any particular *sankhāra*, as explained above. Thus, we should see to what degree all *sankhāras* are repulsive, when we examine them with mindfulness and wisdom, not with the closed eyes and ears of our defilements and desires.

In summary, we can say that the condition of impermanence (*aniccaṁ*) is the condition of "once seen, it's ugly." The more we look and the more we see, the more disgusting and repulsive it is. Therefore, we can say that the conditions of impermanence and "once seen, it's ugly" are gathered together in the same things, that is, in all *sankhāras*. When speaking about impermanence, repulsiveness is also meant. When speaking of repulsiveness, impermanence is implied. Here, then, is a second implication of the word "*dukkhaṁ*."

C. *Dukkhaṁ* as "Uglily Void, Wickedly Empty": By separating the components of *dukkhaṁ* and taking *du* to mean "ugly" and *khaṁ* to mean "void, empty," we arrive at the meaning "uglily void." The condition we call "wickedly empty" refers to the fact that all *sankhāras* have nothing but impermanence, namely, swiftly flowing, endless spirals of change. We can go so far as to say that in these *sankhāras* there is only impermanence and change, that is, the flow of change is itself these things. Besides this, we can't find any abiding substance within them. Consequently, all *sankhāras* have only this condition of being "uglily empty." However, such a meaning of *dukkhaṁ* as this broadens to include *anattā*.[15] Therefore, we will consider it in detail in connection with the fact that when impermanence is seen, then *anattā* must be seen. (To be discussed subsequently.) Here, we simply intend to point out that even this third meaning of *dukkhaṁ* is included in the word "impermanence," because impermanence is thoroughly void. There is only this change which stops for nothing.

Thus, within impermanence there are three conditions: the state of suffering, the state of "once seen, it is ugly," and the state of "uglily void." These are gathered together fully in the same place and at the same moment. In order to realize impermanence genuinely, one must clearly and unavoidably see these three conditions within it. Therefore, we ought to say that when we see impermanence, we without a doubt see *dukkhaṁ*, also. This explains why the Buddha spoke only of impermanence, and not *dukkhaṁ*, in this fourth tetrad of *ānāpānasati*. The reason is that *dukkhaṁ* is included within impermanence in such a way that the two cannot be separated.

CONTEMPLATING *ANATTă*

[15] This voidness or emptiness is synonomous with suññatá.

Now we'll consider how it is that we find *anattā* included within *aniccaṁ*. The characteristic of impermanence naturally indicates for the most part the characteristic of not-self, that is, the characteristic of illusive and the fact that impermanent things have no abiding substance. Characteristics such as these fully demonstrate the voidness of self that we call "*sunnata*." This is the essence of the fact that impermanence demonstrates not-self within itself. Thus, it isn't necessary to say that because of impermanence there is *anattā*. The truth is already apparent that impermanent things have no real substance, that their real nature is merely the flow of change. This is the first point. Now we can further examine according to various implications of the word "*anattā*." We will consider four of them.

A. *Anattā* Because There is Nothing Independent of Causes and Conditions: There is no independent self. Impermanent things are dependent on the factors which have conditioned them. Or from another angle, each thing is only the causal factor for the further conditioning of that other thing which is next in the line of successions. This demonstrates that all things fall under the power of this natural law; they change endlessly, alternately being causes and conditions for each other. According to this view, *anattā* is a further aspect of impermanence. It is the continual change - according to the Law of Change - of all causes and conditions. Each of these must always have the conditions of arising, existing, and ceasing within themselves. Whenever they halt or change, that is the end of their being "selves" or lasting substances. In summary, there is *anattā*, because there is only the impermanence of the things which are causes and conditions.

B. *Anattā* Because Uncontrollable: This point aims at change, once again, which no one can control. Furthermore, its meaning encompasses the various aspects of *dukkhaṁ* which arise out of the uncontrollability of change. Ordinarily, we humans want to be free of *dukkha*, but we are not in control and *dukkha* naturally arises out of impermanence. This uncontrollability of things is based in impermanence. Thus, impermanence is the complete and sole cause of *anattā*. When there is awareness of the fact of non-control, the awareness of *dukkhaṁ* and impermanence comes up immediately. It's the same as when we're burnt and feel pain; we feel the fire's heat simultaneously. There is no way to separate them.

C. *Anattā* Because Ownerless: Things are ownerless because theirs is the condition of being things whose owners cannot be found and because nobody is able to own them. Again, this is due to the power of impermanence which answers to no one and simply changes unremittingly. Its reality is such that nobody can make himself its owner. Even one who has so much power that we suppose him to be God is unable to own impermanence. Rather, this thing holds God within its power, which is to say that God is impermanent. *Aniccaṁ* has the "right" and the power to be like this, to refuse all would-be owners. It is the same as

anattā, only different in name and spelling. As for reality, *aniccaṁ* and *anattā* refer to the same thing - refusal to have an owner.

D. The General Meaning of *Anattā*: This meaning refers to the fact of having the characteristic of being in conflict with or opposing *attā* (self, soul), which is the meaning which summarizes all the other meanings as well as the way to verify them. By "all of these meanings," we mean all the features of *aniccaṁ* and *dukkhaṁ* which have been explained in this chapter. In this respect there are the definitions:

1. if something is *attā*, then it is permanent and pleasant;
2. if something is both impermanent and *dukkhaṁ*, then it is *anattā*.

When the facts are such, it is clearly assured within themselves that *anattatā* (selflessness) is impermanence and *dukkhaṁ*, or that being *anattā* is equivalent to being impermanent and painful. Therefore, all *sankhāras*, which are without exception made up of impermanence and *dukkhaṁ*, are fully *anattā*. Observing and realizing the selflessness of all compounded things is the same as realizing the impermanence and *dukkha*° of them all. Or, to put it the other way, when seeing the impermanence of all *sankhāras,* we must also see their *dukkhaṁ* and *anattā*. We cannot avoid doing so. Thus, the short two-word phrase "seeing impermanence" naturally points further to seeing the impermanence of all *sankhāras* and seeing them in their character of being unavoidably painful and not-self as well.

CHAPTER SUMMARY

Although the Lord Buddha spoke only the words "*aniccānupassī*" (the contemplation of impermanence), the heart of the matter in itself points to larger implications. First, see the impermanence of all conditioned things, because there is no impermanence for us to see in that which is unconditioned. Second, see impermanence according to *dukkhaṁ* and *anattā*, for they are the constant, eternal conditions of all impermanent things. For these reasons, the Lord Buddha only spoke of impermanence without needing to mention *dukkhaṁ* and *anattā* by name in this fourth tetrad of *ānāpānasati*. Therefore, we should understand that this thirteenth lesson aims at the *tilakkhaṇa* (three inherent characteristics) or *sāmaññalakkhaṇa* (universal characteristics) fully, in accordance with the facts explained above.

The practitioner of *ānāpānasati* has a practical way for seeing the impermanence of all *sankhāras*. Impermanence appears from the very beginning of the practice and through each succeeding step. The breaths are *sankhāras*. The mind and mindfulness (*sati*) which attend to the breathing are *sankhāras*. The various objects and images which appear from stage to stage are *sankhāras*. The *vedanā*, such as *pīti* and *sukha* which arise out of concentration on the breathing, are *sankhāras*. The *nivaraṇas* (hindrances) are *sankhāras*. The factors of *jhāna* and every level of *jhāna* are *sankhāras*. The various *dhammas* which are gathered or integrated (*samodhāna*) in that moment are *sankhāras*.[16] Even the scrutiny itself is a *sankhāra*. The fact that the scrutiny changes is a *sankhāra*, too. All the *dhammas* which are being investigated as the objects of each stage and level of the meditation are purely *sankhāras*. For these reasons, we have the opportunity to note impermanence (which include *dukkha*-ness and *anattatā* fully within it) in every step of *ānāpānasati*. And in each step there are many ways in which we can investigate it, depending on how we will choose to do so. However, we can summarize the ways to contemplate in the following categories: contemplate some groups of *sankhāras* as the objects of experience (external *āyatanas*); contemplate some groups of *sankhāras* as the experiencers (internal *āyatanas*) of the objects; and contemplate some groups of *sankhāras* as the conditions for a continual concocting, one after the other, of new things - for example, concentrating on a *nimitta* (imaginary image) brings up the factors of *jhāna* - that is, as dependent origination. Altogether, there are these three categories. In this way, our contemplation of *sankhāras* is comprehensive and complete. Further, in seeing impermanence, painfulness and not-self are seen fully, as explained above. Practicing in this way makes it unnecessary to wander aimlessly outside the framework of *ānāpānasati* meditation which is a comprehensive contemplation of all *sankhāras*, since it contemplates the realities of these natural things rather than just contemplating the names of things as is done in the schools. No matter how much people contemplate in that way, it will never be enough. The results will be no better than contemplating nothing at all.

When the practitioner contemplates the impermanence of any one of the conditioned things which appear during the development of *ānāpānasati*, there will naturally be penetration into the facts of *aniccaṁ*, *dukkhaṁ*, and *anattā* which is profound enough to lead to genuine *nibbidā* (disenchantment) and *virāga* (fading away) for the practice of the following lesson. When there is this realization, in the way he have explained, which is a seeing of *aniccaṁ* more profound and clear than in previous steps of *ānāpānasati*, one will likewise be able to induce the twenty-nine *dhammas* to a higher and more refined degree than in the previous steps, which puts the meditation of this step on a higher level. This lesson is classified as *dhammānupassanā-satipaṭṭhāna-bhāvanā* (the foundation of mindfulness which is contemplation of

[16] The integration of dhammas, generally given as twenty-nine, is explained in detail in the chapter concerning lesson five ("experiencing píti"). "In the moment when the meditator is breathing in and out with clear comprehension of the vedaná as being impermanent, painful, and not-self, the mind attains to twenty-nine different dhammas (virtues, qualities). In other words, all these things can be found in the mind in that moment.

Dhamma), because Dhamma has been contemplated rather than the breath, feelings, or mind, as in the first three tetrads.

This ends our examination of the thirteenth lesson of *ānāpānasati*. Next, we will examine the fourteenth lesson.[17]

[17] The translation of the following chapter will appear in the next Evolution/Liberation.

LESSON 14

Chapter 18 (Constantly contemplating fading away)[18]

The fourteenth step of *ānāpānasati* or the second of this fourth tetrad has as its topic, "The bhikkhu naturally trains himself: continually contemplating fading away, I will breathe in. He trains himself, continually contemplating fading away, I will breathe out."[19] The things that we must consider here are: (1) What is fading away? (2) How does this fading away occur? (3) In what does it arise? and (4) How does one act that one is described as one who contemplates this fading away?

The Pali for fading away is *virāga* which literally means to be without *rāga*, that is to be free of stains, namely lust or the passions. Its meaning or connotations, in fact, refer to the fading away of attachment and clinging, and of all the other mistaken assumptions that lead us either to fall in love and be infatuated or to fall into hatred. So it is that *virāga* here, does not have the exact same meaning as the *ariyamagga*, as in some places.[20] But it refers broadly to making the defilements disappear or dissipate and fade away in the same way that the noble path destroys the defilements. It means specifically the condition of dissolving and fading away, more than it refers to the dhammas which are the means or tools for bringing that fading away about.

From the perspective of practice however, we see both of these together: when seeing fading away clearly and directly, then one naturally sees the dhammas which are the means for bringing about that fading away. It's like when we see a rope that has been tied up in a knot, and then that knot is untied. We also most plainly see the thing that unties the knot. Thus one ought to hold

[18]This lecture is the 45th in this series, from 11 November, 1959.

[19] The Pali for this phrase is "*Virāgānupassi assasissīmiti sikkhati, virāgānupassi passasissīmiti sikkhati.*"

[20]In some places in the Pali, *virāga* is more or less a synonym for the noble eight-fold path *(ariyamagga)*, but that isn't the case here.

that *virāga* in the context of *ānāpānasati* here refers directly to the fading away, and indirectly to the dhammas that cause that fading away in so far that they are appended to that fading away.

The word "fading away" has the opposite meaning of the word "stained." Ordinarily, beings have minds that are stained with everything, with the attractiveness of being this or that kind of self, and with the power of clinging or attaching, or mistaken assumptions that have ignorance as their source. Whenever this stainedness is dissolved and faded, then there is the meaning of "fading away" right there, through the activity of the fading away of the feeling of desire, of passion, of the feelings of being this or that, of being this or that kind of self.

As for the question, "How does fading away occur?" we can answer briefly that fading away arises because of seeing *aniccaṁ* (impermanence) through the method that was discussed in the chapter on the thirteenth step of *ānāpānasati*. Seeing Dhamma in such a way is like undoing, untying, or cleansing, so that it fades and fades away, because it demonstrates that we clearly see the truth that all things ought not to be grasped at, ought not to be attached and clung to, because they are exclusively *aniccaṁ* (impermanence), *dukkhaṁ* (unsatisfactory), and *anattā* (not-self) all the time, and they cause dukkha to arise for the person who clings and grasps at them. It's only from not seeing the truth of this matter that one would go clinging and grasping at things that would cause suffering for oneself. It's like a person who doesn't know about disease, doesn't know the causes of disease, and then is satisfied to mingle and get involved with such things for the sake of pleasure and fun through the power of mistaken assumptions. Whenever such a person sees the danger and harm of such things, there is fading away and an escape due to weariness towards those things arises. Thus, we can say that fading away occurs because one sees the truth of the things that one has clung to.

As for the question "In what does fading away arise?" we can answer broadly that it arises in everything which is impermanent. As we mentioned in the previous chapter, these refer to the five *khandas*, the inner *āyatana* and the various modes of *paṭicca-samuppāda*. Whenever the practioner contemplates and sees the impermanence of something, she naturally sees the fact that the mind begins to fade away from that thing, in that thing.

As for the question "How does one practice in order to be called one who continually contemplates fading away?" we can explain that when seeing impermanence in any one thing until there arises fading away from attachment with every inhalation and exhalation, that activity is called *virāgānupassanā*, the contemplation of fading away. The person who practices in this

way is called *virāgānupassi*, one who continually contemplates fading away. We will examine certain aspects of practice concerning this further.

The practioner who wishes to cause fading away to arise in any particular thing must first contemplate until seeing the *ādīnava*, that is the wicked, nasty harm in that thing. Once seeing the harm or danger of that thing, one will be contented with separating from and divorcing that thing. Thus fading away will occur. Otherwise, no matter what one does, there is no way that one would be satisfied with divorcing that thing. The ancient teachers compared this with a person who mistakes a snake for a fish, who is very delighted and satisfied with that snake, like "taking a spinning discus to be a lotus." He receives various dangers, even to the point of death, because of that over and over again until he finally sees the truth that it's just a snake, it's not a fish. In this way, the words "seeing the wicked harm" here refer to contemplating clearly and directly the impermanence and unsatisfactoriness and selflessness as we explained in detail in the preceding chapter. Consequently one will welcome or be willing to divorce that thing. There will be a certainty to the degree that is called totally surrendering one's faith, which in Pali is "*saddhā ti muddha*." This refers to the certainty of heart through the power of wisdom and it occurs when the mind is *samādhi*, that is, there is the power of *samādhi* included fully. The power of *samādhi* causes one to see clearly to the end and the power of seeing clearly to the end causes one to totally surrender one's faith in not clinging and grasping at that thing ever again. All of these refer to the moment of fading away. All of this occurs during each inhalation and exhalation. As we said earlier, the things called "all *sankhāras*" or *sabbe sankhārā* which are the objects of our contemplation in order to see impermanence and so on. When analyzed according to our academic principles, we distinguish the group of objects as being the five *khandhas* that is one group. The group that experiences the objects are the inner *āyatana* making a second group. And the conditions of the various things that are concocted and arising successively, namely the various modes of *paṭicca-samuppāda* are a third group. Thus one who wishes to practice this step of *ānāpānasati* broadly and deeply ought to note at least these three groups. That is, at a minimum, contemplate the five *khandhas*, the six *āyatana*, and the 12 modes of *paṭicca-samuppāda*, one by one in using an approach to arise within oneself, or so that we see clearly those which already exist within us, and are demonstrating their characteristics within oneself until we see that clearly. Then we take these up to examine as to their impermanence and so forth until we recognize and realize the wicked harm of all these *sankhāras*, from *rūpa*, *vedanā* and the rest. Then we focus on that harm with every inhalation and exhalation until the contentment arises that we are going to separate with the condition that can be expressed as "to get divorced from that thing." Nurture that contentment with every inhalation and exhalation until one absolutely offers one faith with the power of wisdom and the strength of *samādhi* together. Separate from that thing truly, that is one is no longer satisfied with sensual things as being lovely or desireable, and one doesn't cling to states of being this or that, as being self or belonging to self, like this or that. One practices like this with every

inhalation and exhalation until the end. When one has alot of time, one distinguishes these in detail and in various categories until one is skillful and expert. And then on one occasion one will experience that one is able to cause this fading away fully as to its meaning. One sobers up and recovers with the intoxication with sensuality and one recovers from all the clinging and attaching to states of being most truly. *Rāga* (lust), *dosa* (hatred), and *moha* (delusion) become things without any foundation due to this reason.

When we speak comprehensively in the form of *ānāpānasati*, the ancient teachers advised that we take up the breathing, which is the body group, *pīti* and *sukha*, which are the *vedanā* group, the factors of *jhāna* and the various kinds of thoughts and notions which are the *cittā* or mind group to be examined in order to see their impermanence until there arises the condition of fading away just the same. Through this standard, the practitioner must practice *ānāpānasati* starting over again and working through every step and contemplating everything that appears and manifests or that can be considered in order to see its impermanence for the sake of arising and fading away as we have discussed. Taking up the highest happiness to contemplate without having to distinguish and consider all the various kinds of happiness which would seem to be counting your p's and q's according to the academic approach. The reason that we contemplate only one *vedanā* but get broad and comprehensive results is because that which is the basis of all defilements without exception is collected in the point of the *vedanā*, namely the *sukhavedanā* or pleasant feeling that causes us to love, or the *dukkhavedanā* that causes us to hate. These two are the major problem of suffering. Solving the problem right at this point is therefore sufficient. If it seems too little for you, then you can expand on it. At most there are three. You can add the *kāyā* or body, namely the breathing, and the *cittā* or mind group, that is *vittaka* (thinking) or the mind itself, which is in various states or conditions. That would make three altogether.

The important factor is that we must practice with a mind that is *samādhi* through the meditation of sufficient wisdom, that is to meditate or focus on the characteristics of these things, what is called *lakkhaṇūpanijjhāna* up until the characteristic of *aniccaṁ* appears and then there is the condition of *udayabbayañāṇa* the knowledge of arising and decay, and *bhaṅgañāṇa*, the knowledge of ceasing and so on manifesting clearly. Practice until seeing the wicked harm to the degree that is called *ādhīnavañāṇa*, the knowledge of harmfulness. And then absolutely surrender one's faith to the power of wisdom, as we said above. All of this happens with every in breath and out breath through every one of the steps.

When practicing like this, one is called *virāganupassi*, one who continually contemplates fading away with every inhalation and exhalation. When practicing like this completely, that activity is called *dhammānupassanāsatipaṭṭhāna bhāvanā* that is complete. It's the kind of *bhāvanā* or mental development which is able to combine all the 29 *dhammasamodāna*[21] on any higher level than before.

One more special thing that should be understood is that the word *virāga* here includes also the word *nipiddā* or disenchantment, fully within it. This is included in the portion that is called "seeing the wicked danger" until the satisfaction to divorce those things occurs. Otherwise there would be doubts concerning *nipiddāñāṇa*, which is one more important *ñāṇa*, as to where it fits in *ānāpānasati*. So please understand that in this step of *ānāpānasati*, *nibbidā* is included in the word *virāga* in the same way that in the previous step of *ānāpānasati*, *dukkhaṁ* and *anattā* are included in the word *aniccaṁ*.

This completes our consideration of the fourteenth step of *ānāpānasati*. Next we will consider the fifteenth step.

[21]See the chapter on lesson five for an explanation of *dhammasamodāna*.

LESSON 15

(Chapter 19)[1]

Ānāpānasati lesson 15: continually contemplating remainderless quenching

The 15th step of *ānāpānasati* or the third item of the fourth tetrad has as its subject, "that bhikkhu trains himself: continually contemplating remainderless quenching, I breathe in; he naturally trains himself, continually contemplating remainderless quenching, I will breathe out."[2] The things that must be considered are (1) What is remainderless quenching? (2) What is quenched without remainder? (3) Remainderless quenching through what method or approach? and (4) How does one act to be called *Nirodhānupassi* or one who continuously contemplates remainderless quenching?

The words remainderless quenching here refer to that which is the opposite of existence, for example, the existence of form and the non-existence of form are states which are opposites. The first is existence, and the second is remainderless quenching. However, the Dhammic meaning of the words existence and remainderless quenching do not refer to material existence and non-existence, but instead refer to the value or characteristics of those things which have results or effects on the mind or not. An example that can be seen easily is that the existence of form or *rūpa* refers to the existence of impermanence, of dukkhaness, and other things that are associated with *rūpa*. If these things don't exist, it would have the same value as form not existing, or being the remainderless quenching of *rūpa*. Because the words remainderless quenching refer to the quenching of the dukkha that is associated with that *rūpa* in such a way that nothing remains. In short, we call this *nirodha* or the remainderless quenching in the case of *rūpa* or form.

Concerning what is quenched without remainder, if we answer briefly and directly, we would answer that it's the remainderless quenching of the things that are dukkha or of the things that have the birth which is a basis for dukkha. But if we were to categorize this in more detail, we could distinguish three main categories. The details as far as are needed for providing examples are the five *khandas*, the six inner *āyatana* and the twelve modes of *paṭicca-*

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[1] This is lecture 46 in the series and was originally given on 15 November, 1959.

[2] The Pali for this is "**Nirodhanupassi assasissamiti sikkhati; nirodhanupassi passasissamiti sikkhati.**"

samuppāda as we have already discussed in previous lessons of *ānāpānasati*, in so far as they are material basis of impermanence and fading away.

The existence of the five *khandas*, namely the existence of the various *ārammaṇa* or sense objects which are the basis for contact and the various things which are the basis of attachment, whether as sensual attachment or attachment to states of being as discussed earlier. Thus, this refers to the fact that it's the existence of things which are the basis of dukkha. When these things don't exist, or we could say that when these things have quenched or ceased, it naturally means that there are none of these things which are a basis for dukkha, or it's the remainderless quenching of the things which are the basis for dukkha.

If the six inner *āyatana* exist, it means that the things which function in experiencing the *ārammaṇa* or sense objects, or the things which perform the function of making contact with the things which are the basis for dukkha — if these things don't exist, then there is no contact for the things that are the basis for dukkha. The remainderless quenching of these things is merely not having the kind of contact which creates dukkha.

The existence of all the different modes of *paṭicca-samuppāda* is the existence of the concocting of all these various levels and stages of *sankhāras*, or concocted things, which depend upon each other and fabricate new things and then go and depend upon other things giving rise to further things successively until reaching the stage where the condition of dukkha is born directly. This result that is dukkha, is able to further nurture, support, and concoct its own original cause. That is, it enables ignorance to yet exist and to change in many different forms. If these various modes did not exist, that is, if they didn't arise or didn't carry on, then dukkha could not take shape in these various ways. Therefore, the quenching or non-existence of these concoctions and concoctings has the same value as the quenching of dukkha or the non-existence of dukkha, or of dukkha not being able to take form.

Everything that we have spoken of so far is to point out that quenching is the non-existence or is the same as the fact that these things are unable to perform the function according to their meaning. The thing that is called quenching is the quenching of that which creates dukkha, which can be categorized in three ways as we have done previously. Seeing quenching is to see the remainderless quenching of dukkha because these things stop performing their functions and this quenching of dukkha is something that can be observed in these things that have quenched or stopped performing their functions. As for the point through what method is this quenching to be done, the explanation is that the practitioner must examine until seeing the harm of the existence of these things, first of all and clearly. Then the mind will naturally tend towards satisfaction in the value of the non-existence of these things. Then one focuses on the value of these things not existing with every inhalation and exhalation up until the mind inclines and realizes the remainderless quenching of those things completely as is called, "to surrender one's faith absolutely until it's all finished" and to do so with a mind that has sufficient *samādhi*. The words seeing the harm of these things refers to seeing through five characteristics namely:

(1) within these things, there is the fact of impermanence; (2) the fact of dukkhaness; (3) the fact of being not-self; (4) the characteristic of burning to ruin or consuming within itself; and (5) the fact of constantly transforming or changing.

As for the harm or danger of this impermanence, dukkhaness and *anatta*, we have already considered it in detail in our discussion of the thirteenth lesson and it's not necessary to discuss here. As for the words to be burning itself to ruin, or consuming within itself, this refers to the fact that these things are burning themselves up such that they decrease just as a fire eats its fuel and further creates heat for anyone who gets close and burns up anyone who volunteers to be its fuel without anything being left. This is the harm or punishment of getting involved in these things or of attaching and clinging to them.

As for the condition that is called "transforming itself all the time," this refers to the fact that impermanence is always changing its form from this kind of impermanence to that sort of impermanence and on to another endlessly. Therefore, the things that have transformed into a form that coincidentally fits the wishes of a certain individual are taken to be good lovely and pleasurable by that individual or even as being just and so on. And then that impermanence is clung to as being something worthy of clinging until it changes into something else, or to the point that that person cries, bursts into tears once again. Happiness or suffering, laughter or tears, puffing up or deflating, and all the other pairs of this sort exist solely to deceive all the sentient beings without end. In one cycle or one pair, there is the naturally limited age of that thing and it changes within its limitations until reaching its end of its allotted time or of its cycle. Then it transforms into another cycle or circle in a different way and so on endlessly. This can be called, the impermanence of impermanence, or the impermanence hidden or buried within impermanence, which exists in a certain form or cycle or circle and transforms endlessly as is called *vibarinamadhamma[?]* in this case.

Whether impermanence, or dukkha, or *anattā* or *santapadhamma[?]*, that is the fact of burning itself up, or *vibarinamadhamma*, the fact of endlessly transforming, all of these are considered to be the harm or dangers of *sankhāras*, and they exist chock-full within all *sankhāras*. The practitioner must focus upon these *sankhāras* until seeing the harms and dangers clearly and directly to the degree called *ādīnavānupassanāñāṇa* most truly, that is the knowledge of contemplating the *ādīnava*, the harmfulness. Only in this way will fading away of the lustful attachment in those things take place, and then one inclines towards satisfaction in thorough quenching, or in the non-existence of these things. When there is satisfaction in such quenching, the quenching or giving those things a value as if they did not exist, is something that can be done easily.

In this practice of quenching,[3] one must first know what particular thing is going to quench through the power of what. According to the main principle, each thing naturally

[3] Lecture 47, 16 November, 1959

quenches through the power of the quenching of the causes and conditions which had concocted that thing and through the power of the arising of its opposite. The things that are called causes and conditions here can be categorized into six types as follows: (1) *nidāna*, which means the ground or foundation which brings certain results, that is, it's what give rise to the result of being that particular thing. For example, a tree is the foundation for fruit. If the tree didn't exist then how could the fruit appear. Thus, the quenching of the tree is the quenching of the fruit at the same time. This is another way of demonstrating that if we are to quench something, we must discover that which is its foundation in order to quench that source of the thing.

(2) *Samudhaya*, which means source or the place of establishment of that thing, which refers to that which is the basis of establishment of that thing so that it can exist and establish itself. For example, the earth is the basis of the establishment of a tree. Everyone can see, of course, that all trees and all kinds of other things depend upon the earth for them to sprout and thrive upon the earth. If the earth were to dissolve and fall away, then how could these trees stand? They naturally would dissolve and disappear as well along with the condition which is its basis, that which is called *samudhaya*. This differs from the first kind of cause, which is the ground that gives certain results. The student must observe the difference clearly.

(3) *Jāti* which means birth or birthing arising. If we were speaking of trees, this would refer to their sprouting and growth. If there is the earth and soil, a seed and other causes and conditions, but there was no sprouting or growth, how could the tree appear? Thus birth, or growth is another important factor in the arising and appearance of a thing. We could destroy a certain tree without having to get rid of the earth or the fertilizer in the earth or destroying other things. But all we have to do is destroy its growth. For example, to destroy the life within the seed, or to prevent its way of growth. This is called destroying its *jāti* or birth.

(4) *Āhāra* (food, nutrition) This refers to that which brings growth or certain results. Again this just refers to growth. An example concerning a tree is that it must rely upon food, in particular upon the various elements existing in the soil that it uses as food or fertilizer to exist. It’s not just that it requires the earth as its basis to sprout, and then it can go on growing. Imagine that in the soil there were no elements or fertilizers, then that tree would shrivel up and die anyway. Here we can see that the thing called *ārāha* is another important factor in the existence of all things.

(5) *Hetu* This refers to the direct primary cause of a thing. In our example of the tree, that which can be called the cause of the tree is the intention of a certain person who decided to plant that tree, putting a seed into the soil. Or, it could have been that some animal ate the seed in some fruit and then excreted it, planting it without intention. Or even that the wind or water brought the seed and deposited it or made it fall from its parent tree. All of these are the original cause, directly, of the birth of that tree. If these *hetu* didn’t exist, even if the other factors existed, there would be no chance for that tree to sprout and thrive.

(6) *Paccaya* This refers to the various supporting factors which are complimentary and which fit the requirements of that thing. In our example of the tree, this would refer to things like that the soil be tilled, that there be sufficient sunlight, that there is protection from various dangers, such as animals eating it, or piercing it and so on. If the *paccaya* or conditions are good, then it can grow and thrive successfully. But if these *paccaya* or conditions are insufficient, then it won't grow, or at least not very well. And then there would always be the danger that it might stop growing some time. The practitioner must study the various difference between the meanings of all these words — that is *nidāna*, the ground or foundation; *samudhaya*, source or origin; *jāti*, birth; *āhāra,* food or nutriment; *hetu*, cause; and *paccaya*, condition — in the way that we explained them, using a tree as an example, to show that all of these factors must come together for there to be the appearance and existence of something. You can compare this with a human being or with a collection of the five *khandas* which is the basis for the six *āyatana* and the 12 modes of *paṭicca-samuppāda* until you know how to quench the *nidāna*, quench the *samudhaya*, quench the *jāti,* quench the *āhāra,* quench the *hetu*, and quench the *paccaya* of them. All of this is to make it quench, to remove its various causes.

As for quenching through the power of the arising of its opposite, this refers primarily to two things. One the arising of that which is called *ñāṇa* or insight knowledge, which is the knowledge which is the opposite of *avijjā*, or ignorance. When *ñāṇa* arises, ignorance quenches automatically. *Nāma-rūpa*, another word for all the myriad *sankhāras* that have their births in *avijjā*, naturally quench. This is called quenching due to the arising of *ñāṇa*. For example a person quenches through the arising of the knowledge that persons don't exist; there are just the *khandas*, the *dhātus*, the *āyatana*, and so on. As for the case of our comparison using the tree, we might say that a person could destroy that tree through the correct understanding of how to destroy it, which would be the cause of destroying it through knowledge, which would be the knowledge of how to remove its *nidāna*, *samudhaya*, or whatever concerning that tree. To put it in the *dhamma* way of speaking, we could say that the tree doesn't exist, or it's quenched due to the *ñāṇa* or correct knowledge that the word tree is just convention or a sound. In actuality, the tree doesn't exist. It's just the various elements that are collected and grouped according to various natural laws as we have discussed above. In this way the feeling of there being a tree quenches. Even in this manner, we can say is to quench through the power of the arising of *ñ āṇa* or *vijjā*, true knowledge, which is the opposite of *avijjā*, ignorance.

Two. The other is the manifestation of the state of thorough quenching or of that *dhamma* which is the point of quenching of that thing. This thing is the opposite of birth, because this thing is the opposite of *nidāna*, *samudhaya*, *jāti, āhāra, hetu*, and *paccaya.* When this thing enters, its opposite must quench. To put it directly this thing is the fruit of correct practice that has reached the end, to the point of being the noble path that quenches all defilements and fetters. In essence, it's the quenching of ignorance once again. It's only that here, we focus on the particular *dhamma* that has the power of doing the quenching of removing or of cleansing or of disintegrating or of incerating[?] or whatever you want to call it, but it's a

state of *dhamma* which makes ignorance or the defilements and *taṇhā* quench. If this *dhamma* appears, it means that that which is its opposite has already quenched, because that which is its opposite is now manifest. As for the case of the tree, we could say further that now, in the place of where the tree once existed, there remain only ashes, for example. This is to show that a certain consumption and burning up has taken place through the activity of human beings or through some natural power such as lightning. The thing which is the opposite, namely that which is the quenching of that tree, has manifested and the quenching of that tree has taken place. This is called quenching due to the appearance of the *dhamma* that is the thorough quenching of that thing.

Whether the arising of *ñāṇa*, or the appearance of the *dhamma* which is the thorough quenching, together it means the quenching of that thing, through the appearance of its opposite, which we have distinguished in two ways. And when we bring in the elimination of the origin or source and of the various environmental factors, of which we have listed six, altogether there are eight factors, which enables us to say that these *sankhāras* quench in these eight ways. The practitioner of this step of *ānāpānasati* is considered to be *nirodhānupassī*, one who continually contemplates remainderless quenching by practicing in noting these *sankhāras* clearly and directly, through contemplating the five dangers of those *sankhāras* most intensely as we have described, until the point where satisfaction arises of the non-existence of these *sankhāras*, namely the quenching of these *sankhāras*, and then the harm and danger of these things will quench also. With every inhalation and exhalation, one examines and contemplates the quenching of the *sankhāras* through seeing that they quench in these eight ways as we described. Thus one is named *nirodhanupassi*, which means that although one is focusing mainly upon quenching, the characteristics of *aniccaṁ*, *dukkha*§, and *anattā* still manifest as a foundation for the mind to incline and realize this quenching.

The things taken up as objects for contemplating this quenching are the same as we have expressed throughout, namely the five *khandhas*, the six inner *āyatana*, and the twelve modes of *pañicca-samuppàda*. But this requires that the practitioner have a sufficient foundation in the theoretical studies. The practitioner who sticks to the line of *ānāpānasati* takes the various things that have appeared in its practice -- the breathing itself, the *vedanā* (namely *pīti* and *sukha*, which are *jhāna* factors), or even of the mind which changes and transforms in various ways at that moment -- as being the *ārammaṇa*, or object of contemplating quenching the way that we have explaine, while breathing in and breathing out. In such a way one is considered to be *nirodhānupassī* fully just the same.

The three *sikkhā* or trainings are perfected in one. Such activity is called *dhammānupassanā satipañña hāna bhāvāna*, which is a kind of *bhāvāna* that is able to collect all the 29 different dhammas on an even higher level. Our consideration of the fifteenth step of *ānāpānasati* is now completed.

LESSON 16: Contemplating Relinquishment

(Chapter 20)

The sixteenth step of *ānāpānasati*: continually contemplating giving up.[22]

The sixteenth lesson of *ānāpānasati*, or the fourth of the fourth and final tetrad has as its topic, "This bhikkhu naturally trains himself, 'constantly contemplating giving up, I will breathe in,' and naturally trains himself, 'constantly contemplating giving up, I will breathe out.'[23] The things that must be considered in this step of *ānāpānasati* are (1) What must we do for it to be giving up? and (2) How must be act that it is called *paṭinisaggānupassī*, namely one who continuously contemplates giving up? As for the things that must be given up, they refer to the three categories of the five *khandhas*, the six *āyatana* and the twelve modes of *pañicca-samuppàda*, just as in the previous steps of *ānāpānasati*. As for training in the three *sikkhà* the situation is exactly the same as in step thirteen.

The phrase "giving up" or *paṭinissagga* has two characteristics. The first is giving up a thing directly. The second is the mind inclining towards Nibbāna, which is the utter quenching of all those things. The first implies giving up those things in such a manner that the one giving up remains in the same place. The latter means that those things are in the same place and the one giving them up escapes to someplace else. If we speak in *puggalādhiṭṭhana*, or in terms of persons, it's as if they were different things, but in a dhammic sense (*dhammādhiṭṭhana*) their fruits are the same. This can be compared to a person who gives up something he loves. He can either throw it away, or flee in some way from it. But the fruits will naturally be the same, that is, to be without that which was loved. The commentators spoke of these two ways to make it easier for individuals with different levels of intelligence -- those in whom the meaning given to words are different.

But there do exist meanings that are truly different, between which we can distinguish. (1) Giving up things that are clung to as belonging to self, *attaniya* — giving up those things through relinquishing them, that is contemplating them as not worth clinging to as being mine. (2) Giving up things clung to as being self, *attā* — giving up those things through inclining towards Nibbāna, namely the utter quenching of such things. Examining this matter in detail, we will see that the things clung to as belonging to self are easier to give up than the things clung to as being self. This is because the things that are clung to as belonging to self are things that merely stick to self, or are the hangers-on of self. For this reason they are able to be given up first. This point can be compared to the feelings of *tua-goo*, "me-go" and *kong-goo*, "my-go." Things which are *kong-goo* or belonging to me can be thrown off more easily than *tua-goo*,

[22]Lecture 49, 17 November 1959.

23The Pali for this is Patinissaggànupassi assasissãmiti sikkhati. Patinissaggànupassi passasissãmiti sikkhati.

me/myself, which we don't know how to release or toss away. Throwing *tua-goo* off is going against one's will, like cutting one's throat and committing suicide, which we are not yet willing to do. As for the things that are *kong-goo*, or belonging to me, we have the capacity to relinquish them, whether as an obligation, or doing so willingly to trade it for something else, or even because we slip from its grasp. These are all possible. But the thing that is called *tua-goo*, me/myself, is something much more obscure when it comes to giving it up or getting free of it. This is because it's the mainstay or principle in all of our actions. Thus, being able to give up this me/myself requires a very intelligent *upāya*, much more than is required for giving up things that only belong to me. When we speak in the personal sense, we can say that when *tua-goo* wants to give itself up genuinely, it must run to another thing which is able to destroy that *tua-goo* completely and utterly. When *tua-goo* or me/myself has given up the things which belong to me, the *kong-goo,* so that only me/myself remains, it then runs towards that which is able to quench that me/myself conclusively. So there is a difference, as we mentioned above. There is the mind that gives up all things as a relinquishing or a sacrifice and the mind that sails towards Nibbāna that is the point of quenching of all things, including the mind.

Nevertheless, the difference between these two is merely legalistic. In actual practice, the way of practice and the fruits of practice are the same. The way of practice for giving up the five *khandhas*, or the *āyatana* does not mean giving up the material things, such as throwing them on the rubbish heap. Rather it refers only to giving them up through removing *upādāna,* any kind of attachment and clinging that exists towards them. This uprooting of *upādanà* must be done with clear, direct insight into *aniccaṁ*, *dukkhaṁ*, and *anattā* until it becomes the seeing of the total voidness of self, whether it is the self on the owner side, or the self on the side that is clung to as property or possession. When it is void of both sides only then can *upādāna* be removed and there is the fruit of no attachment that is the original cause of *dukkha*.

Even in the contemplation for the removing of attachment to the five *khandhas* or any of the *āyatana* which are clung to as self, we must practice using the same method, that is to contemplate *aniccaṁ*, *dukkhaṁ*, and *anattā* just the same. Only that we evade in a manner that all of this when it is a such it is *dukkha*. When you don't want to suffer then incline the mind for the thorough quenching without any remainder of these things and then there won't be anything that is *dukkha* anymore. In other words, it's an inclining into *nibbàna*, or the mind flows towards *nibbàna*. But none of this means that we just wait until the body disintegrates or that we must hurry and destroy this body through committing suicide or any such thing. To kill oneself will not finish off *upādanā* and in fact is a kind of *upàdanà* most fully. Without attachment, one wouldn't kill oneself. As for waiting until the body disintegrates, it's not a way of practice. The disintegration of the body does not mean that *upādanā* will be finished, because people and animals ordinarily have their *khandhas* breaking up and disintegrating every day, but it's not the destruction of *upādanā* merely through such deterioration and breaking up of the body. Therefore, neither killing oneself or waiting until the body breaks up by itself is the quenching of *upàdanà* that clings to self and consequently it is not an inclining or moving towards *nibbàna* in any way. We can only practice in a way where life still remains when we contemplate and see that if there is any attachment to self remaining, then there must be *dukkha* in the various forms to that degree, then incline the mind in a way where there is no self to be a basis for *dukkha* ever again. This is called having a mind inclining towards the thorough quenching of self, which can be called inclining towards *nibbàna*. And then to commit oneself fully to the practice that leads to seeing impermanence, *dukkha*-ness and not-self on the highest level, which causes us to no

longer feel genuinely that any self is left. There are just the pure *sankhāras* spinning according to their causes and conditions. The things that are called *dukkha*, such as ageing and death are within this group, namely they are certain aspects of *sankhāra* amongst all the various *sankhāras* that spin and flow according to their causes and conditions. There isn't any aspect in which there is clinging as being our "self" or belonging to us. Even the mind, which is still aware, feel and thinks or is contemplating the nature of these *sankhāras* -- this mind doesn't cling to itself as being self. It doesn't cling to itself as being mine, as being knower or seer, but instead sees only that this mind, as well as the seeing are merely *sankhāras*, just the same. And it sees that all of these *sankhāras* without exception are merely concoctions or creations. They are just natural, ordinary things that are just such. There is no way that they could be self, belong to self, be ours or theirs, be the owner or the owned, or any such similar thing.

When the mind realizes this voidness of self truly in such a way, it is equal to the quenching of oneself completely, which is what we call *nibbàna* here. Therefore *pañinissagga*, the kind of giving up which uses the *upāya* or skillful means of making the mind run towards *nibbàna* has a meaning of practice and has fruits of practice exactly the same as the kind of *pañinissagga* which uses the *upāya* of relinquishing all of those things. This is because both *upāya* have the same meaning, that is, to make voidness of self or *suññatā* appear. If one contemplates the voidness of the side that is clung to, we call it relinquishing those things. But if one contemplates the side which is the clinger, namely the mind, then it becomes making the mind realize voidness, that is *nibbàna* itself. Thus the objective is the same, that is to make both sides realize voidness equally, then *dukkha* cannot appear. And in terms of practice, both of these are the same. There is only one or the other, and when finally reaching the end, both will utterly extinguish *dukkha* and that all things without exception are void while the mind remains a self that needn't be void -- this is something impossible, because that which is called voidness is a whole or singular. If it is truly realized, it makes everything void, both the side that clings and the side that is clung to.

Therefore in terms of practice, when one practices to the end then both sides are void together at the same time. Otherwise, it's another kind of voidness, but is a voidness which isn't genuine, a mere temporary voidness, or it is merely certain levels or certain aspects of practice that aren't yet complete which give results merely of letting go of this thing or that thing. It lets go merely of things that are easy to let go of, for example, those aspects which are clung to as the belongings of self, or that belong to me, in the cruder aspects. But it doesn't affect or shake the self, or the "me myself," at all.

But when *suññatā* or genuine voidness manifests, just then is it truly void and there is nothing left to wait or remain as self. The self that acts, and is acted upon, such actions and the fruits of such actions, no matter whether they are considered to be *kusala* or *akusala* or *abhaygrita* (neither *kusala* nor *akusala*) all realize voidness together and without exception. The mode of giving up, namely *pañinissagga* occurs fully without requiring anyone be the giver-up or the relinquisher because it's all void anyway. Even the giving up itself or the things that are given up must still be void, that is it's the thorough quenching of selfhood. Therefore when we speak in *paramata* or ultimate terms or in terms of the highest truth, we say it's the very same voidness. It's the genuine giving up and there is just one, there are not two kinds or many kinds, as is spoken of in common speech, in the way that they distinguish different sides or aspects as we did earlier using *bukaltisathan* or the personal terminology. Whether the five

khandas, the six inner *āyatana*, or the modes of interdependent conditioning of these things which is called *pañicca-samuppàda* -- all are given up completely through this means of realizing voidness as we have explained. This examination of the five *khandas* as being void is a giving up of the five *khandas* within itself.[24] In other words, before this time we received or clung to the *khandas* in some aspects as being self and in other aspects as belonging to self, through the power of *upādāna* . Now the five *khandhas* have been contemplated according to the truth, that is, they are void utterly and are not the basis for attachment ever again, and so consequently attachment ceases. When attachment quenches, there is nothing left to be a means for clinging, and the five *khandhas* become void also. When there is no more such attachment or accepting, then it has the fruits equal to giving up even though there is no need for the one who gives up because the mind and the *upadana* have become void of self. To summarize, the cont3emplation of the five *khandhas* as being void is to relinquish or give up the five *khandhas* and so it is called *paricāga-pañinissagga*, the giving up through sacrifice. And the contemplation of the mind as being void of self, that is making the mind incline towards *nibbàna*, which is the quenching of all those *khandhas* including the mind itself can be called *pakanatana-pañinissagga* or giving up through leaping or springing. The contemplation of the five *khandhas* as being void is to contemplate them as being *aniccaṁ*, *dukkhaṁ* and *anattā* to the utter end as we explained earlier and in detail concerning the thirteenth step of *ānāpānasati*.

Contemplating the six inner *āyatana* as being void has the same characteristics as with the five *khandhas* because the six inner *āyatana* are one aspect of the five *khandhas*, that is the *khandha* which performs the function of knowing the *ārammaṇa* or sense objects which make contact. In another respect we can say that the *āyatana* refer to the group among the five *khandas* which function in the moment of receiving the *ārammaṇa* through the eyes, ears, nose, tongue, body or mind. Making these six things void is to contemplate them as being *sankhāra* or as being merely and purely natural without any discernable self, but they merely have the characteristic of being their own natural mechanisms which are able to receive the *ārammaṇa* according to the nature of *rupadhammas,* and *namadhammas*, that is physical and mental natures that are collecting together and are able to do all these wonderful things to the point of the wrong assumption arising that these things are *attà* or self or that they have an *attà* or self within them. Contemplating these things until seeing them as utterly void is considered to be *pakatanapañinissagga* most truly. In essence this means distinguishing the aspect of the *khandhas* which are the mind to be contemplated in particular as being void. Contemplating the various modes of *pañicca-samuppàda* as being void is to contemplate such that we see this automatic mechanism of *rupadhammas* and *namadhammas,* that is the interdependent concocting of these things in an endless chain, which is merely a natural mechanism of the *rupadhammas* and *namadhammas* that are able to perform such functions automatically. Within these natures themselves, there is no need for any *attà* or spirit or soul or any kind of self that would be the culprit or the principal actor or essence in any of these actions or functions that are performed. It is merely the movement of pure natures which condition each other when they come into association and they act upon each other, pushing on each other as causes and fruits until the various symptoms of conditioning appear endlessly. Therefore it is just these *rupadhammas* (material things) and *namadhammas* (immaterial natures) in the moments of being causes and conditions or in the moment of being fruits (*vipakka)* or the various modes of

[24] This is now lecture 49, 18 November 1959

that conditioning that gives rise to those fruits coming from their causes and then those fruits become the causes of other things, and so on endlessly. All of this are the natural modes, merely, of *rupadhammas* and *namadhammas*. There is no *attà* or self or anything associated with any of this. Every aspect is thereby void of any meaning of being self or of belonging to self in the least way. This is the condition of giving up every aspect and mode of *pañicca-samuppàda* both the aspects which are causes and those which are fruits and those which are merely the modes of concocting. Thus it can be said that the giving up this *pañicca-samuppàda* group is both *paricaggpañinissagga*, giving up through sacrifice as well as *pakanatanapañinissagga*, giving up through leaping. That is, it is a giving up both in the aspect which are the five *khandhas*, namely the aspects which are fruits, and the aspects which are conventionally called the mind, that is the doer of these activities which arises from not knowing the truth or of being utterly deceived. When these three are combined then we can say then it's the giving up of the world in its position of being *ārammaṇa*, it's the giving up of the mind in its position of the mind as being the one that experiences the *ārammaṇa,* that is the world, and it's the giving up of the association or the concocting or production of all these things in the world that create the world or that are caught up in the interrelationships between the world and the mind that experiences the world. When all three categories are given up then it is that there's nothing remaining to be the basis for *dukkha* or the basis for attachment for attachment and clinging which is the basis for all that *dukkha*. There is only non-suffering, cool, quenching peace, liberation, letting go and freedom. There are no more distinctions and discriminations or whatever we might say or describe. In short all of this together amounts to the end or the absolute finish of the *saṁsaravata*, the stream of *dukkha* and we like to call such a state the realization of *nibbàna*. All of this is to demonstrate how *pañinissagga* or giving up is connected with the word *nibbàna*.

As for the problem concerning what are we to do to receive the title *pañinissaganupassi* or one who continuously contemplates giving up -- we can explain that the one who practices *ānāpānasati* up to this step must change the principle of one's noting and contemplate in a new way, that is to move up to a higher level that causes the clear experience of one's own giving up. That is after seeing *aniccaṁ, dukkhaṁ* and *anattā* there arises a satisfaction with the fading away of attachment and the quenching of all *sankhāras*. Then make the mind to be unperturbed regarding all *sankhāras* that have been contemplated as being void genuinely with every inhalation and exhalation. The best way is to go back and practice every step of *ānāpānasati* again from the first step and to successively contemplate everything that appears, beginning with the breathing, the various *nimitta* and the *jhāna* factors up until the dhammas which are the basis for clinging directly, that is *sukkhavedana* or pleasant feeling in the *jhānas*, and the mind that notes these various things all as being things which must be given up because there's nothing worth clinging to in any way. Then focus and scrutinize that all of these things are *aniccaṁ, dukkhaṁ* and *anattā* even further until the mind is filled with weariness and disenchantment and one's passion and lust for those things fades away and then the mind is filled with the dhamma that is the quenching of those things, that is the insight that all these things have no self at all until the mind lets go or is void of clinging to those things even higher. And to proceed further until reaching the *kicca* or duties to be done that is to let go through *samucheda-vimutti* (liberation through absolute cutting off) truly.

In the beginning stages it is just *tadaṅga-vimutti* or coincidental liberation: through practicing *ānāpānasati*, the mind lets go of those things by itself. And there are moments of *vikampanavimuddhi*, as when the mind is filled with *jhāna* and lets go through the power of that *jhāna* for the entire period of *jhāna*. We must try to do all of these are things with great care, precision and subtlety with every inhalation and exhalation. Whatever kind of practice it is noting whatever kind of *ārammaṇa* on whatever level -- all of it's considered to be *pañinissaggānupassī*. When practicing in this way, it's called developing *dhammānupassanāsatipaṭṭhāṇa-bhāvanā*, the meditation of contemplating dhamma application of mindfulness, which is the final stage of true meditation and it combines all the twenty-nine *samudhānadhammas* on the highest level of our practice and cultivation of *ānāpānasati* in the stage which is complete and perfect *vipassanā-bhāvanā* or insight meditation.

Our consideration of the sixteenth step of *ānāpānasati* is now complete.

Concerning this fourth tetrad it is considered to be dhammanupassanasatipathanabhāvanā, the contemplation of dhamma foundation of mindfulness in all respects. The first step is to contemplate aniccaṁ, dukkhaṁ and anattā which can be summarized as being suññatā, the essential meaning of which is that they are void in such a way that there is nothing to cling to and if one insists on clinging one will suffer. In the next step one notes and contemplates the fading away of attachment and clinging concerning those things because it hates and fears the harm and danger, namely the dukkha that is born from clinging. In the next step, there is contemplation of the sort that sees that there isn't any real self in any of it, or in any of those things. Clinging is just an ephemeral, hot and cold phenomena because that which clings doesn't haven't any genuine self, the things that are clung to don't have any true self and so how could that clinging be any kind of self. One contemplates in a way that quenches the self of all these things completely. In the fourth and final step, one notes and contemplates in a way that can be conventionally spoken of as now we have given up and tossed away all of those things by making them truly void. All things without exception are truly void. And then the mind is in a state that we might assume to called having realized nibbàna -- it has dissolved within that voidness or suññatā, and there is nothing left to be self in order to cling to anything as being of self, ever more.

Practicing this group or tetrad is called contemplating Dhamma because these four aspects of Dhamma are contemplated directly. We contemplate (1) aniccatā, (2) virāga, (3) nirodhā and (4) paṭinissagga. In the way that we have discussed it, this is different from the earlier tetrads. In the first tetrad we only examined the body or the breathing. In the second tetrad, we contemplated only the various aspects of the vedanā. In the third tetrad because we contemplated the mind in various ways. But here, it's the contemplation of Dhamma, that is the natural condition which is the truth of all things that when known the mind is liberated from all dukkha. They differ as to their level in this way. The fourth tetrad of ānāpānasati is now finished.

Combining all four tetrads

The first tetrad is purely samatha-bhāvanā. The second and third tetrads are samatha-bhāvanā mixed with vipassanā-bhāvanā and this fourth tetrad is vipassanā-bhāvanā perfected. Samatha-bhāvanā is to note through the ārammaṇa (object) or nimitta (sign) for

the sake of mental stability or concentration and has as its final fruits the jhānas. Vipassana-bhāvanā is to note the characteristics of impermanence, suffering and unsatisfactoriness, and not-self to make the mind know clearly and experience this in all things. Its final result is the ñāṇas. So it is that the sixteen lessons or objects of ānāpānasati begin with training the mind to have the strength of jhāna through the first tetrad, then training the strength of ñana that arises mixed together with the strength of jhāna in the second and third tetrads.